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A STUDY OF THE PARAGRAPH

BY

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THOMAS'S PARAGRAPH.

W. P. I

PREFACE

THE principal aim in teaching the art of Composition is that the pupil may learn to write effectively. That his written words should be well chosen and grammatically arranged is not enough. What he writes must be clear and forcible. He must write so that his meaning cannot be misunderstood and so that what he has to say will interest the reader. If the reader understands what is written and is interested in what is said and in the way in which it is said, we have effective writing.

The principles of the art are embodied in many textbooks. On my desk I count (before me) thirty-eight, which I have selected from a much larger number, as best fitted for the use of colleges and secondary schools. So numerous are these texts that I have long felt that there could be no real excuse for another, that any new work could be only a new arrangement or combination of those already in existence, and that there was no new thing to be said. All these textbooks insist upon the same qualities of writing, upon the same rhetorical principles for attaining these qualities; all show the difference between artistic and scientific styles, between argument and exposition, narration and description. They all discuss and offer exercises upon the choice of words, the construction of sentences, the methods of paragraph construction, and the outlining or planning for the unity of the whole composition. What more, one might ask, could be needed?

These books, it may be repeated, are good books and well fitted for classroom use. In general, the pupil who uses them, under an intelligent teacher, will learn how to write good sentences, and perhaps how to combine his sentences into good narratives, or expositions, or arguments. But even with the best books and with excellent teachers, the novice in composition is liable to find his greatest difficulty in the logical arrangement of his thoughts and ideas, hence in the effective presentation to the reader of what is very clear in the writer's mind.

It is just at this point of paragraph structure that Miss Thomas's little book will prove a valuable supplement to the excellent texts already in use. It is not intended to supplant them, but to be used in conjunction with them. It is the embodiment of an original idea, startling at first in its very simplicity, but eminently logical, sane, and practical. Miss Thomas has found the method by which great masters of the language, perhaps unconsciously, have wrought the fabric of their thought, and by this book makes it feasible to teach that method to pupils in secondary schools. It is so easily to be understood by teacher and pupil alike as to make it valuable for school use. Its clearness of arrangement, logical development step by step, number and variety of exercises, and, most of all, its interest to the pupil, will serve to make it popular among teachers of English.

The method proposed is the outcome of experience in teaching, and has already been used with enthusiasm in several schools, by a number of instructors, all of whom are enthusiastic in commending it as the most practical means of teaching the development of the paragraph.

So sure do I feel that this book is original, teachable, and

valuable, that I wish to make use of it in teaching college classes, in the endeavor to correct one of the greatest faults of college students' composition,—ignorance of proper paragraph construction. That students will profit by this study and practice, is certain.

F. P. EMERY.

DARTMOUTH COLLEGE.

INTRODUCTION

The Purpose of the Book.—In offering this book on Paragraph Writing, I have in mind my own High School boys and girls. Indeed, inasmuch as they have been my inspiration and guidance, it is for them I write. It is for them that I have taken up an old subject in a new way; their needs have demanded this exertion on my part; their appreciation has been sufficient reward. So I am indebted to an outside stimulus for this attempt to solve an intangible, elusive subject, and to put into the pupils' hands a practical method of approach to such a vital subject as Composition. That such a method has met with their approbation and approval, and that it has elicited practical results, are sufficient facts to make the pragmatist feel that his work is worth while.

It becomes necessary, then, to discuss briefly the Paragraph in its usual presentation in order to show, if possible, wherein lies the difficulty which renders the subject still intangible to the average High School boy and girl.

In the first place, let us look at the definitions of the Paragraph. We find various, of which the following are examples: "A Paragraph is a short passage in a written discourse containing a complete and unified statement of a particular point." Or, "it is the extreme limit of the expansion of a single articulated idea; an expanded sentence which contains a topic corresponding to the subject of a sentence, and predicate matter corresponding to the predicate of the sen-

tence." Again, it may be said: "a Paragraph is the most complete expanded form of articulated speech, which still must confine itself to the expression of one idea," or "a group of sentences related to each other and to the central idea is called a Paragraph."

These are all good definitions, but what use does the High School boy or girl make of them? From investigation, it seems to me that the above definitions remain in their own sphere as definitions, and in many cases have not the virtue of even so stable a form. Ask a pupil to define a Paragraph. His answer will be something along this line: "a collection of sentences," "a mass of sentences." Something it is with no definite beginning or end; a series separated more or less by accident, if separated at all, from the rest of the composition; a series which might just as well have remained with its fellows in the essay.

Just why the boy has indented here, and again there, that is beyond him. When questioned, he may reply, "It looks better," but there seems to be no more vital reason. Then suppose the pupil knows the definition, and also the fact that the test of a Paragraph rests in its ability to be expressed in one sentence. Does he put that definition into practice? Indeed, the average High School composition would seem to deny the truth of it. Very good definitions they are, but the definition of what a thing *is* never gave a boy the *means* to attain the end warranted by the definition.

From the definition of the Paragraph, the next steps that are offered the boy are the "means of development" which determine the structure of this unit. In this respect, Rhetoricians have agreed that in every well-written Paragraph there lies a sentence that states the main thought; moreover, that every succeeding sentence bears a specific

relation to the so-called Topic Sentence; that is, it may be a repetition of it, a contrast of it, a specific instance proving it, an effect produced by it, or the application derived from it. Indeed, they show by illustration that one Paragraph may be composed entirely of sentences which expand the Topic Sentence by means of specific instances, or by means of details, or comparisons; on the other hand, one Paragraph may be so built that it embraces sentences from each of the five groups. On his part, the boy may develop his Topic Sentence by specific instances, by comparisons, by contrasts, using the method best suited to expand the main idea. Or, he may use any combination of these means which will adequately expand his Topic Sentence. Such means as these does the boy have suggested to him as the most tangible tools for him to handle, in order to construct his Paragraph unit.

From these suggestions, however, it can be concluded that Rhetoricians do not entirely disagree with the Psychologists, that a concrete method is desirable. The Psychologist tells us that the nature of the growing mind demands the concrete before the abstract. This method is in general practice not only in the elementary grades, but is carried on in dealing with any new subject in the High School. So, also, we go a step farther; confessing the muddled mental condition of our boy, we require him to study Mathematics, believing that the logical reasoning demanded in that science will assist him later in developing that much-desired power of clear thinking. Moreover, the Sciences, logical in themselves, offer the boy the same opportunity. In both cases he has something definite with which to work, and something definite to accomplish. Also, when we come to our own department of English, we analyze the essays of Macaulay; we

present the logical method of Burke; all to show that clear thinking and clear presentation are the only means that serve for any advantage. So, too, by these very means, we endeavor to show that Macaulay had a method of writing, that his method came first; that Burke, too, had a method behind his art; that both men were conscious of the necessity as well as the practical advantage of a formal and technical background. All this we do in order to fulfill the duty which the Psychologist has laid open: the demand of a concrete method as the only means to reduce to some kind of order a growing mind woefully chaotic and muddled.

Though we admit that a concrete method is desirable, yet by the very variety of developments suggested, we are admitting that now we are dealing with a subject that seems to deny formal laws. We have to admit that this subject of teaching our boys and girls *how to write* is of an elusive character, and of a changeable nature. Because of this fact we sometimes find ourselves hitting wide of the mark, the distance being proportionate to the indefiniteness in our own minds. We are convinced of this fact by the apparently hopeless results which seem to overwhelm us in this branch that do not in the sciences and mathematics whose solutions rest upon formal laws.

Then we begin to ask ourselves, — just how far are *we* concrete in presenting this subject of *how to write?* We are concrete in definitions; we say what a Paragraph *is*, what a Topic Sentence *is;* we define the essential qualities of any writing, as *unity*, *coherence*, and *emphasis;* we say that a Paragraph which "deals with a single thought or a group of connected ideas" possesses unity; that it possesses coherence if its sentences are arranged in logical sequence; that it possesses emphasis if it lays the greatest stress upon

the strongest ideas. Moreover, we give suggestions, so-called aids to unity, or coherence, or emphasis; we even suggest those means by which the pupil may *violate* unity and coherence. Have we once given him any definite and distinct means which will make him develop naturally the Topic Sentence into a unified and coherent Paragraph? In other words, have we done anything but give vague suggestions?

The lack, then, in the presentation of this subject lies along the line of *concreteness* and *definiteness*. This involves the all-important subject of the technique of the art. We hear of the technique of music, of sculpture, and by the word we mean the underlying framework, stiff, rigid in itself, which gradually disappears under its finished artistic product. So also we hear of the technique of the drama, the laws which govern its production, hard and fast rules, whose adoption is essential to produce a perfected piece of work. Then, too, we hear of the technique of written composition. But sometimes we fail to appreciate the significance, for so eager are we to see a finished, artistic output which demands originality, poetic coloring, and glowing imagination that we neglect to show the all-essential framework. We neglect to teach the boys and girls the five-finger exercises, expecting them to produce a symphony.

Not only do we forget the importance of this elementary stage in the art in our anticipation of a fine product, but we forget also just the nature of our pupils. We forget we are working for the average mind, the mind that is seeking a straightforward, simple manner of expression. Ninety-nine cases out of one hundred consist of pupils of mediocre abilities, while the one

hundredth is the boy or girl who is the genius endowed with literary ability and power of expression, and who, therefore, needs little of the five-finger exercises. Too often we forget the ninety-nine, and consequently we have the outcry, "Oh, I can't write anyway." Now, if we can remember this, by far the largest class of boys and girls, if we keep them in mind, inculcate in them the fact that they *can* write as clearly and correctly as the one-hundredth model, we have taken the first step. When these boys and girls realize that written composition, clear, straightforward, simple, is entirely within their own mediocre abilities, they will see the subject in a new light. To attain this new-enlightened goal they will work hard in proportion to the concreteness and definiteness of the presentation of the subject.

It would seem, then, that my sympathy is with the boys and girls. Such is the case. I believe that our overwhelmingly poor results in Composition work are due to the indefiniteness in the method of presenting the subject. We expect too much, and we give too little; we blame the pupils when we should blame ourselves. Hence it is from sympathy for the pupils, and with their coöperation that this book has grown. Written with their help, it is the result of classroom experience, and offers a plan which is at once simple, clear, concrete, and practical. Their appreciation has thus prompted me to offer to other High School boys and girls this book, in the hope that it may help them to unravel the tangle of Composition Writing.

To quote the words of Professor Emery: "the book is the embodiment of an idea startling at first in its very simplicity." The scheme offered is one which presents the Paragraph in the light of a Geometry Proposition. Its

purpose is to show that the underlying structure of the Paragraph as well as of the Geometry Proposition is definite and formal. Therefore, it hopes to prove the practicableness of transferring to the development of the Paragraph those means offered the Geometry student to assist him in attaining exactness and definiteness. These means are simply formal expressions which give the pupil something tangible with which to work, and something upon which he can concentrate his attention; they are the familiar terms: *Given*, *To Prove*, *Proof*, *Summary*. Applied, then, to the development of the Paragraph these same terms may assist the pupil in adjusting and arranging his thoughts and thereby may help him to write clearly and effectively.

This Scheme a Practical Solution for Teaching the Three Principles of Composition Writing. — Unity, Coherence, and Emphasis, the three principles of composition writing, are naturally and easily absorbed in this scheme of Paragraph development. The geometrical formula is responsible for thus presenting these principles in a manner unobtrusive but clear and forceful. *Unity* of the Paragraph is the foundation of the scheme in that a complete proof of the Subject Sentence cannot fail to produce this effect. It is not too much to say that any digression would be so apparent as to be practically impossible. *Coherence*, too, is well provided for by the nature of the scheme. Inasmuch as each reason of the proof is stated in a sentence and forms a definite part in the arrangement of the whole it is very easy to supply those words — links which will serve to bind into one whole the constituent sentence parts. The third principle, *Emphasis*, is also well taken care of. The first and last sentences in the

Paragraph are monopolized by the Subject Sentence, and by the summarizing sentence, or in other words, the Subject Sentence in another form. Thus by this scheme, rigid and formal as it may be, the pupil is not told that he must obtain unity, coherence, and emphasis in his writing, but he is given the means which will enable him to bring about naturally such a result.

The author wishes to express her obligation for advice and assistance to Superintendent John F. Scully of Arlington, who first stimulated her to develop into a book these principles grown out of class-room experience; to Miss Alice Spaulding of Brookline, who, by her own use of the method, gave the author suggestions and encouragement.

To the English Faculty of Dartmouth College, the author wishes to express her debt of gratitude for their interest in the progress of the work. Above all, she wishes to acknowledge her thanks and appreciation to Professor Richardson, Professor Emery, and Mr. Childs, who gave valuable suggestions, friendly advice, and impartial criticism.

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H. T.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE PARAGRAPH	17
	1. The Importance of the Paragraph	17
	2. The Whole Composition	17
	3. Definition of the Paragraph	18
	4. The Subject of the Paragraph	18
	5. The Subject Sentence of the Paragraph	20
	6. An Analysis of the Subject Sentence	24
	7. The Importance of the Subject Sentence	27
	8. The Position of the Subject Sentence	27
	9. Conclusion in Regard to the Position of the Subject Sentence	28
	10. The Subject Sentence and its Relation to the Paragraph	28
	11. The Paragraph and the Geometry Proposition	30
	12. General Geometrical View of the Paragraph	34
	13. A Graphic Representation of the Paragraph	35
	14. Summary	36
II	THE PERIOD OF IMITATION	38
	1. The Meaning of the Term	38
	2. The Period of Imitation in the Art of Composition	38
	3. The Meaning of Good Models	39
	4. The Process of Imitating Good Models	44
	5. General Conclusions	52
	6. Importance of Repeating the Subject Sentence	53
	7. The Links between the Sentences	54
	8. Comments on the Works of this Period	55
	9. The Double Process of Procedure	56
	10. Expository Paragraphs	57
	11. Description	66
	12. Narrations of One Paragraph	79
	13. Argumentative Paragraphs	85
	14. Exercise which can be called a Corollary to the Imitation Period	88

CHAPTER PAGE

15. The Range of the Work 88
16. Summary 89

III. The Period of Suggestion 91
1. This Period the Most Natural Step after the Imitation Period 91
2. The Period of Suggestion in the Art of English Composition 91
3. Explanation of the First Step of the Suggestion Period 92
4. Suggestion Period, Second Step 96
5. Suggestion Period, Third Step 100
6. Exercise on the Suggestion Period, Steps 2 and 3 . 100
7. Summary 103

IV. The Period of Originality 104
1. Meaning of the Term 104
2. The Range of the Work 104
3. The First Step in Original Paragraph Building . 105
4. The Long Theme 109
5. Paragraph Drill 112
6. Write several Paragraphs on a subject selected from § 3 or on any other subject 112
7. Summary 113

Appendix 115

Index 123

A STUDY OF THE PARAGRAPH

CHAPTER I

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE PARAGRAPH

1. **The Importance of the Paragraph.** — The Paragraph is the most important unit of prose. It is an essay complete and perfect in itself, embracing all the structural qualities of the entire composition. Hence it has a power-to-stand-alone quality which enables it to be separated from its fellow Paragraphs in an essay, and when thus isolated, can exist by itself. So complete a unit is it that it is the vital division of Prose Composition; so important a unit is it that too much drill cannot be laid upon it; so valuable a unit is it that it is not too much to say that the ability to write one Paragraph means the ability to write any number of Paragraphs which may constitute the essay. Thus it follows that we shall put all emphasis upon this unit of prose.

2. **The Whole Composition.** — What is meant by the whole composition of which the Paragraph is so vital a part? By the whole composition we mean a complete and systematic discussion of a specific subject. The subject may be, *How to make a Canoe*, or *Our Camping Expedition*, or *The Character of Macbeth*. Whatever it is, we can define the *subject* of a composition as the *cause of the existence* of the composition. It is the reason *why* the composition is written. This reason may be (1) your desire to explain a

certain process, as, for example, *The Evolution of the Modern Newspaper;* (2) your desire to describe a place, as *The Church which I Attend;* your desire to describe a scene, as *The Scene from My Window;* (3) your desire to tell a story, an incident, or an anecdote, as *The First Money I ever Earned;* (4) your desire to convince the reader of the truth of a certain question, as *My Reason for believing that the High School should have One Session.* In any one of these cases, the *subject given* will be the reason for the writing of the composition; *the complete development of this subject* will constitute the whole composition.

3. **Definition of the Paragraph.** — Let us, then, determine what this important unit of prose, called the Paragraph, is in itself. Let us consider it as an isolated unit and as a complete essay in itself. If we say that an essay or composition is the complete development of its specific subject, then we can say that each paragraph is a complete development of its own subject, that it is just as complete in itself as the composition is complete in itself.

4. **The Subject of the Paragraph.** — Considering the Paragraph as an essay complete in itself, we can say that the subject of the Paragraph is what we are writing about, the very *cause of the existence* of the Paragraph, *the very purpose of writing.* In other words, the subject is the reason *why* the Paragraph is written. The writer has a definite purpose in view; he may wish to tell you something, to describe to you something, to explain something, or to convince you of some truth. In any case, his *purpose in writing the paragraph is the subject.*

Exercise

What is the writer's purpose in each of the following Paragraphs? Is his purpose *to describe, to narrate, to explain,* or *to convince?*

It was overpoweringly ridiculous — we must honestly confess it — the deportment of the maiden lady while setting her shop in order for the public eye. She stole on tiptoe to the window, as cautiously as if she conceived some bloody-minded villain to be watching behind the elm tree, with intent to take her life. Stretching out her long, lank arm, she put a paper of pearl buttons, a jew's-harp, or whatever the small article might be, in its destined place, and straightway vanished back into the dusk, as if the world need never hope for another glimpse of her. It might have been fancied, indeed, that she expected to minister to the wants of the community unseen, like a disembodied divinity or enchantress, holding forth her bargains to the reverential and awe-stricken purchaser in an invisible hand. But Hepzibah had no such flattering dream. She was well aware that she must ultimately come forward and stand revealed in her proper individuality; but, like other sensitive persons, she could not bear to be observed in the gradual process, and chose rather to flash forth on the world's astonished gaze at once. — HAWTHORNE: *The House of the Seven Gables.*

The temper and character which prevail in our colonies are, I am afraid, unalterable by any human art. We cannot, I fear, falsify the pedigree of this fierce people and persuade them that they are not sprung from a nation in whose veins the blood of freedom circulates. The language in which they would hear you tell them this tale would detect the imposition; your speech would betray you. An Englishman is the unfittest person on earth to argue another Englishman into slavery. — BURKE: *Speech on Conciliation with America.*

In a long ramble of the kind on a fine autumnal day, Rip had unconsciously scrambled to one of the highest parts of the Catskill Mountains. He was after his favorite sport of squirrel shooting, and the still solitudes had echoed and reëchoed with the reports of his gun.

Panting and fatigued, he threw himself, late in the afternoon, on a green knoll, covered with mountain herbage, that crowned the brow of a precipice. From an opening between the trees he could overlook all the lower country for many a mile of rich woodland. He saw at a distance the lordly Hudson, far, far below him, moving on its silent but majestic course, with the reflection of a purple cloud, or the sail of a lagging bark, here and there sleeping on its glassy bosom, and at last losing itself in the blue highlands. — WASHINGTON IRVING: *Rip Van Winkle* in *The Sketch Book.*

The manner of Addison is as remote from that of Swift as from that of Voltaire. He neither laughs out like the French wit, nor, like the Irish wit, throws a double portion of severity into his countenance while laughing inwardly; but preserves a look peculiarly his own, a look of demure serenity, disturbed only by an arch sparkle of the eye, an almost imperceptible elevation of the brow, an almost imperceptible curl of the lip. His tone is never that either of a Jack Pudding or of a Cynic. It is that of a gentleman, in whom the quickest sense of the ridiculous is constantly tempered by good nature and good breeding. — MACAULAY: *Essay on Addison.*

5. **The Subject Sentence of the Paragraph.** — The subject of the Paragraph, that sentence which explains *the reason why the Paragraph is written*, we shall call the *Subject Sentence.* This subject Sentence bears the same relation to its Paragraph that the Subject does to the entire essay or composition. This relationship may be represented thus, —

Subject Sentence: Paragraph = Subject: Composition.

Exercise

1. What is the *Subject Sentence* in each of the Paragraphs referred to in § 4?

2. What is the *Subject Sentence* in each of the following Paragraphs?

1. We must linger a moment on this unfortunate expression of poor Hepzibah's brow. Her scowl, — as the world, or such part of it as sometimes caught a transitory glimpse of her at the window, wickedly persisted in calling it, — her scowl had done Miss Hepzibah a very ill office, in establishing her character as an ill-tempered old maid; nor does it appear improbable that, by often gazing at herself in a dim looking-glass, and perpetually encountering her own frown within its ghostly sphere, she had been led to interpret the expression almost as unjustly as the world did. "How miserably cross I look!" she must often have whispered to herself; and ultimately have fancied herself so, by a sense of inevitable doom. But her heart never frowned. It was natural, tender, sensitive, and full of little tremors and palpitations; all of which weaknesses it retained, while her visage was growing so perversely stern, and even fierce. Nor had Hepzibah ever any hardihood, except what came from the very warmest noon in her affections. — HAWTHORNE: *The House of the Seven Gables.*

2. Still, we do not think that the blame of Burns's failure lies chiefly with the world. The world, it seems to us, treated him with more, rather than with less, kindness than it usually shows to such men. It has ever, we fear, shown but small favor to its teachers; hunger and nakedness, perils and revilings, the prison, the cross, the poison chalice, have, in most times and countries, been the market price it has offered for wisdom, the welcome with which it has greeted those who have come to enlighten and purify it. Homer and Socrates and the Christian apostles belong to old days, but the world's martyrology was not completed with these. Roger Bacon and Galileo languish in priestly dungeons; Tasso pines in the cell of a madhouse; Camoëns dies begging on the streets of Lisbon. So neglected, so "persecuted they the Prophets," not in Judea only, but in all places where men have been. We reckon that every poet of Burns's order is, or should be, a prophet and teacher to his age; that he has no right to expect great kindness from it, but rather is bound to do it great kindness; that Burns, in particular, experienced fully the usual proportion of the world's goodness; and that the blame of his failure, as we have said, lies not chiefly with the world. — CARLYLE: *Essay on Burns.*

3. The plan of the Spectator must be allowed to be both original and eminently happy. Every valuable essay in the series may be read with pleasure separately; yet the five or six hundred essays form a whole, and a whole which has the interest of a novel. It must be remembered, too, that at that time no novel, giving a lively and powerful picture of the common life and manners of England, had appeared. Richardson was working as a compositor. Fielding was robbing birds' nests. Smollet was not yet born. The narrative, therefore, which connects together the Spectator's Essays, gave to our ancestors their first taste of an exquisite and untried pleasure. That narrative was indeed constructed with no art or labor. The events were such events as occur every day. Sir Roger comes up to town to see Eugenio, as the worthy baronet always calls Prince Eugene, goes with the Spectator on the water to Spring Gardens, walks among the tombs in the Abbey, and is frightened by the Mohawks, but conquers his apprehension so far as to go to the theater when the Distressed Mother is acted. The Spectator pays a visit in the summer to Coverley Hall, is charmed with the old house, the old butler, and the old chaplain, eats a jack caught by Will Wimble, rides to the assizes, and hears a point of law discussed by Tom Touchy. At last a letter from the honest butler brings to the club the news that Sir Roger is dead. Will Honeycomb marries and reforms at sixty. The club breaks up; and the Spectator resigns his functions. Such events can hardly be said to form a plot; yet they are related with such truth, such grace, such wit, such humor, such pathos, such knowledge of the human heart, such knowledge of the ways of the world, that they charm us on the hundredth perusal. We have not the least doubt that if Addison had written a novel, on an extensive plan, it would have been superior to any that we possess. As it is, he is entitled to be considered not only as the greatest of the English essayists, but as the forerunner of the great English novelists. — MACAULAY: *Essay on Addison.*

4. An accidental occurrence had instructed me how much sweeping might be done in a little time. I found at my door in Craven Street, one morning, a poor woman sweeping my pavement with a birch broom; she appeared very pale and feeble, as just come out of a fit of sickness. I asked who employed her to sweep there; she said, "Nobody, but I am very poor and in distress, and I sweeps before gentlefolkses doors,

and hopes they will give me something." I bid her sweep the whole street clean, and I would give her a shilling; this was at nine o'clock; at 12 she came for the shilling. From the slowness I saw at first in her working, I could scarce believe that the work was done so soon, and sent my servant to examine it, who reported that the whole street was swept perfectly clean, and all the dust placed in the gutter, which was in the middle; and the next rain washed it quite away, so that the pavement and even the kennel were perfectly clean. — BENJAMIN FRANKLIN: *Autobiography.*

5. I was always fond of visiting new scenes, and observing strange characters and manners. Even when a mere child I began my travels, and made many tours of discovery into foreign parts and unknown regions of my native city, to the frequent alarm of my parents, and the emolument of the town crier. As I grew into boyhood, I extended the range of my observations. My holiday afternoons were spent in rambles about the surrounding country. I made myself familiar with all its places famous in history or fable. I knew every spot where a murder or robbery had been committed, or a ghost seen. I visited the neighboring villages, and added greatly to my stock of knowledge by noting their habits and customs, and conversing with their sages and great men. I even journeyed one long summer's day to the summit of the most distant hill, from whence I stretched my eye over many a mile of *terra incognita,* and was astonished to find how vast a globe I inhabited. — WASHINGTON IRVING: *The Author's Account of Himself* in *The Sketch Book.*

6. It was, as I have said, a fine autumnal day. The sky was clear and serene, and nature wore that rich and golden livery which we always associate with the idea of abundance. The forests had put on their sober brown and yellow, while some trees of the tenderer kind had been nipped by the frost into brilliant dyes of orange, purple, and scarlet. Streaming files of wild ducks began to make their appearance high in the air. The bark of the squirrel might be heard from the groves of beech and hickory nuts, and the pensive whistle of the quail at intervals from the neighboring stubble-field. — WASHINGTON IRVING: *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* in *The Sketch Book.*

7. There was one time of the year which was held in Raveloe to be especially suitable for a wedding. It was when the great lilacs and laburnums in the old-fashioned gardens showed their golden and purple wealth above the lichen-tinted walls, and when there were calves still young enough to want bucketfuls of fragrant milk. People were not so busy then as they must become when the full cheese-making and the mowing had set in; and besides, it was a time when a light bridal dress could be worn with comfort and seen to advantage. — GEORGE ELIOT: *Silas Marner.*

8. As Ichabod jogged slowly on his way, his eye, ever open to every symptom of culinary abundance, ranged with delight over the treasures of jolly autumn. On all sides he beheld vast store of apples, — some hanging in oppressive opulence on the trees, some gathered into baskets and barrels for the market, others heaped up in rich piles for the cider-press. Farther on he beheld great fields of Indian corn, with its golden ears peeping from their leafy coverts, and holding out the promise of cakes and hasty pudding; and the yellow pumpkins lying beneath them, turning up their fair, round bellies to the sun, and giving ample prospects of the most luxurious of pies; and anon he passed the fragrant buckwheat fields, breathing the odor of the beehive; and as he beheld them, soft anticipations stole over his mind of dainty slapjacks, well buttered, and garnished with honey or treacle, by the delicate little dimpled hand of Katrina Van Tassel. — WASHINGTON IRVING: *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* in *The Sketch Book.*

6. An Analysis of the Subject Sentence. — The examination of the Subject Sentences in § 4 reveals that each is composed of two elements: (1) the circumstances under which the statement is made, and (2) the fact or fundamental quality asserted by the statement. Call (1) the *Given Material*, and call (2) the statement *To Be Proved.*

For example, consider the following Subject Sentences: —

1. "*It was overpoweringly ridiculous . . . ; — the deportment of the maiden lady while setting her shop in order for the public eye.*"

a. What are the circumstances *given?* The maiden lady setting her shop window in order for the public eye.

b. What is the quality asserted *to be proved?* Her deportment (while doing this) was ridiculous.

2. "*The manner of Addison is as remote from that of Swift as from that of Voltaire.*"

a. What are the circumstances *given?* The manner of Addison.

b. What is the statement *to be proved?* Addison's manner is as remote from Swift's manner as from that of Voltaire.

3. "*In a long ramble of the kind on a fine autumnal day, Rip had unconsciously scrambled to one of the highest parts of the Catskill Mountains.*

a. What are the circumstances *given?* Rip's long ramble on a fine autumnal day.

b. What is the statement asserted *to be proved?* He had unconsciously scrambled to one of the highest parts of the Catskill Mountains.

4. "*The temper and character which prevail in our colonies are, I am afraid, unalterable by any human art.*"

a. What are the circumstances *given?* The temper and character in our colonies.

b. What is the statement asserted *to be proved?* This temper and character are unalterable by any human art.

Exercise 1

In the following Subject Sentences, state (1) *what is given*, and (2) *what is to be proved.*

1. And Raveloe was a village where many of the old echoes lingered, undrowned by new voices. — GEORGE ELIOT.

2. To the influence which Addison derived from his literary talents was added all the influence which arises from character. — MACAULAY.

3. But though his (Johnson's) pen was now idle his tongue was active. — MACAULAY.

4. The cavalier took but little notice of the company or the entertainment. — WASHINGTON IRVING.

5. I was always fond of visiting new scenes and observing strange characters and manners. — WASHINGTON IRVING.

6. Distress made him (Johnson) not servile, but reckless and ungovernable.— MACAULAY.

7. The volume appeared at the date assigned, and won instant praise from all sides. — MACAULAY.

8. The Dictionary, though it raised Johnson's fame, added nothing to his pecuniary means. — MACAULAY.

9. He had plenty to do through the next hour. — GEORGE ELIOT.

10. The inscription on the tombstone has not been without its effect. — WASHINGTON IRVING.

11. Truly was there something high, generous, and noble in the native composition of our poor old Hepzibah. — HAWTHORNE.

12. While the elderly gentleman stood looking at the Pyncheon House, both the frown and the smile passed successively over his countenance. — HAWTHORNE.

Exercise 2

In the following Subject Sentences selected from themes, state (1) *what is given*, and (2) *what is to be proved*: —

1. We heard the dull roar of the falls long before we reached them.

2. There are two main types of aëroplanes, — monoplanes and biplanes.

3. Before me is a row of books which represent various studies and lines of work.

4. As we ascend, the fog which has rested all night upon the lowlands lifts and veils the surrounding hills from sight.

5. On the last day of August, I took a long walk into the country.

6. The food given to poultry varies.

7. We paddled quietly up the river for three miles.

8. The first thing to consider in making plans for a fine bed of asters is the selection of the seed.

9. The harvest brings the faithful laborer his reward.
10. Never before had I seen such a storm.
11. What should the spirit of Christmas be?

7. The Importance of the Subject Sentence. — The importance of the *Subject Sentence* can be clearly seen from the part it plays in the Paragraph. Can a house be built with no foundation, or can it be built upon a foundation of sand? Can a composition be expected to convey any meaning unless it be built upon a substantial subject? Can a Paragraph be clear, strong, and permanent unless it be constructed upon something which is in itself stable, firm, and worthy of its structure? Then, the Subject Sentence must be regarded as the foundation of the Paragraph. It must never be lost sight of, lest the structure become weak and tottering.

8. The Position of the Subject Sentence. — In each of the Paragraphs in §§ 4 and 5 the position of the Subject Sentence is that of the *first* sentence in the Paragraph. This position is certainly the most emphatic position in any Paragraph because it attracts the eye at once and claims the attention immediately.

Exercises

1. Examine any ten Paragraphs in Macaulay's *Essay on Johnson* or *Addison*, and find the average percentage of the number of Paragraphs opening with the Subject Sentence.

2. Examine any sketch of Irving's *Sketch Book* in the same way.

3. Take any magazine article and observe particularly the first sentence in each Paragraph. See if you can grasp

the sense of the article by reading only the first sentence of each Paragraph.

Let these exercises be continued at the discretion of the teacher.

9. Conclusion in Regard to the Position of the Subject Sentence. — It is clear that many writers consider the emphatic position of the Subject Sentence to be the first sentence in the Paragraph. The artist can afford to diverge from this rule, the mechanic cannot. At present, you are the mechanic, the man who must learn how to handle his tools, the man who must learn the simplest rules of his trade. Remember that every artist must be first a mechanic. Hence, believe that Macaulay knew what he was doing when he usually wrote as the first sentence in each Paragraph, his Subject Sentence. Confirm this belief by noticing in your reading what use the author has made of this *first emphatic attention-attracting* position. Therefore in your elementary mechanical work set a high value upon this opening sentence.

10. The Subject Sentence and its Relation to the Paragraph. — We have called the Subject Sentence the foundation upon which the Paragraph is to be erected; we have said that this Subject Sentence is the subject of the Paragraph; moreover, we have decided that in every Subject Sentence there lies a fundamental quality or act to be proved true. Therefore, inasmuch as the Paragraph is the complete development of its own subject stated in its Subject Sentence, let us call the body of the *Paragraph* the *Proof*.

Exercise

The following Paragraphs are complete Proofs of their respective Subject Sentences. Supply a suitable Subject Sentence for each Paragraph Proof.

Suggestion: — 1. Read the Proof several times, that you may not miss any detail.

2. Remember that the Proof is *complete*, and is entirely covered by its own Subject Sentence.

3. Therefore, in selecting a suitable Subject Sentence, aim at one that will be general enough in its nature to embrace all the details set forth in the Proof.

1. [Subject Sentence.] "While men of philosophical spirit and cultivated minds have been sent from England to ransack the poles, to penetrate the deserts, and to study the manners and customs of barbarous nations with which she can have no permanent intercourse of profit or pleasure; it has been left to the broken-down tradesman, the scheming adventurer, the wandering mechanic, the Manchester and Birmingham agent, to be her oracles respecting America. From such sources she is content to receive her information respecting a country in a singular state of moral and physical development; a country in which one of the greatest political experiments in the history of the world is now performing; and which presents the most profound and momentous studies to the statesman and the philosopher." — WASHINGTON IRVING: *The Sketch Book.*

2. [Subject Sentence.] "Never before had she had such a sense of the intolerable length of time that creeps between dawn and sunset, and of the miserable irksomeness of having aught to do, and of the better wisdom that it would be to lie down at once, in sullen resignation, and let life, and its toils and vexations, trample over one's prostrate body as they may! Hepzibah's final operation was with the little devourer of Jim Crow and the elephant, who now proposed to eat a camel. In her bewilderment, she offered him first a wooden dragon, and next a handful of marbles; neither of which being adapted

to his else omnivorous appetite, she hastily held out her whole remaining stock of natural history in gingerbread, and huddled the small customer out of the shop. She then muffled the bell in an unfinished stocking and put up the oaken bar across the door." — HAWTHORNE: *The House of the Seven Gables.*

3. [Subject Sentence.] "On stormy nights, when the wind shook the four corners of the house, and the surf roared along the cove and up the cliffs, I would see him in a thousand forms, and with a thousand diabolical expressions. Now the leg would be cut off at the knee, now at the hip; now he was a monstrous kind of a creature who had never had but one leg, and that in the middle of his body. To see him leap and run and pursue me over hedge and ditch was the worst of nightmares. And altogether I paid pretty dear for my monthly fourpenny piece, in the shape of these abominable fancies." — R. L. STEVENSON: *Treasure Island.*

4. [Subject Sentence.] "Cedric, the instant an enemy appeared, launched at him his remaining javelin, which taking better effect than that which he had hurled at Fangs, nailed the man against an oak tree that happened to be close behind him. Thus far successful, Cedric spurred his horse against a second, drawing his sword at the same time, and striking with such inconsiderate fury, that his weapon encountered a thick branch which hung over him, and he was disarmed by the violence of his own blow. He was instantly made prisoner, and pulled from his horse by two or three of the banditti who crowded around him. Athelstane shared his captivity, his bridle having been seized, and he himself forcibly dismounted, long before he could draw his weapon, or assume any posture of effectual defence." — SCOTT: *Ivanhoe.*

11. **The Paragraph and the Geometry Proposition.** — The following definite facts were noted in regard to the Paragraph: —

(1) That it is a unit complete in itself.

(2) That it exists for a specific reason.

(3) That this specific reason is usually stated in a sentence called the Subject Sentence.

(4) That the Paragraph itself consists of the development or Proof of the Subject Sentence.

Now consider the following Geometry Proposition.

Notice the following points: —

(1) It is a complete unit in itself.

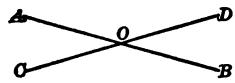
(2) It exists for a specific reason, namely, to convince you of the truth of a certain statement.

(3) There exists Given Material, the foundation of the entire structure.

(4) The Proof is but a complete development of the material given; its purpose being to convince you of the truth already asserted.

Geometry Proposition

If one straight line intersects another straight line, the opposite or vertical angles are equal.



Given the straight lines AB and CD intersecting at the point O.

To prove $\angle AOC = \angle DOB$ and $\angle AOD = \angle COB$.

Proof. $\angle AOC + \angle AOD = 2$ rt. $\measuredangle$.

(The sum of two adjacent angles formed by one straight line meeting another straight line equals two right angles.)

Also $\angle BOD + \angle AOD = 2$ rt. $\measuredangle$.

(Same reason.)

$\therefore \angle AOC + \angle AOD = \angle BOD + \angle AOD.$

(Things equal to same thing are equal to each other.)

Subtracting $\angle AOD$ from the two equals,

$$\angle AOC = \angle BOD.$$

(If equals be subtracted from equals, the remainders are equal.)

In like manner it may be proved that $\angle AOD = \angle COB$.

Q. E. D.

Example. — Let us consider a Paragraph from the point of view of a Geometry Proposition. For instance, suppose the subject assigned is a Paragraph on *Johnson's Political Affiliations*. In Macaulay's own Paragraph, we find this sentence: *Johnson was a Tory, not from rational conviction, but from mere passion.* Using this as our first sentence, let us state definitely *what we have given*, and *what we have to prove*, and then let us follow out the *proof*.

Subject Sentence. — Johnson was a Tory, not from rational conviction, but from mere passion.

Given. — Johnson, a Tory.

To prove. — He was a Tory,

(1) not from rational conviction,

(2) but from mere passion.

Proof.

Johnson, a Tory not from rational conviction.

(1) Johnson's opinion was that one form of government was as good as another.

(2) He was never interested enough in politics to reason out the good or bad points of either side.

Johnson, a Tory from mere passion.

(3) He had always lived in Tory atmosphere.

(4) In his infancy, he had heard his father talk of the villainies of the Whigs.

(5) When three, he had been taken to hear Sacheverell preach.

(6) He had gone to a Tory College.

(7) This increasing prejudice was evident in his articles written for Cave's Magazine.

Summary Sentence. — Thus it is evident that it was not any sensible conviction, but it was mere obstinate impulsiveness that made a Tory of Johnson.

The Planning of the Paragraph. — In the arrangement of the sentences, the Paragraph follows the order found in the above geometrical view of the Paragraph. For example: —

Sentence 1. — Subject Sentence.

Sentence 2. — Subject Sentence repeated in other words. This step causes a slight narrowing of the Subject Sentence, and thereby makes the transition into the Proof proper less abrupt.

Sentence 3. — First sentence in Proof.

Sentence 4. — Second sentence in Proof.

Sentence 5. — First sentence in second part of Proof.

Sentence 6. — Second sentence in second part of Proof.

Sentence 7. — Third sentence in second part of Proof.

Sentence 8. — Fourth sentence in second part of Proof.

Sentence 9. — Fifth sentence in second part of Proof.

Sentence 10. — Summary Sentence.

The Paragraph Written, Following the Order of Sentences Indicated Above

Johnson was a Tory, not from rational conviction, but from mere passion. It was not a case of reasoning out the question in regard to his political affiliations, but it was simply a question of prejudice. Indeed, Johnson's opinion was that one form of government was as good or

as bad as any other; nor did he care to give any more logical a reason. He was never even interested enough in either party to consider its good or bad points. He was a Tory, however, for the reason that he had been born and brought up in Tory surroundings. In his childhood, he had heard nothing except talk in regard to the villainies of the Whigs. When only three years old, he was taken by his father to hear Sacheverell, the vehement Tory preacher. Then later, he had gone to Oxford, a Jacobitical college. His prejudice, increasing at every stage, finally showed itself in Cave's Magazine, in which, as Johnson himself expressed it, " he took care that the Whig dogs should get the worst of it." So it is evident that it was prejudice arising from this Tory atmosphere in which he was born and brought up, rather than any reasoning one way or the other, that made a Tory of Johnson.

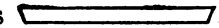
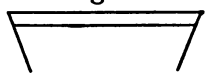
12. **General Geometrical View of the Paragraph.** — Inasmuch as we have shown that some analogy exists between the Paragraph and the Geometry Proposition, let us look at the Paragraph in a new light. Consider every Paragraph as a Proposition in Geometry, in which there is something *given*, and something to *prove*. Both of these essential elements can be found in the Subject Sentence of the Paragraph. Now prepare to prove the Subject Sentence. This process will constitute the *Proof*. The Proof will consist of sentences which may prove the Subject Sentence by means of illustrations, by means of comparisons, or by means of specific instances. In every case, the aim should be to *prove* it. The last sentence closes the Paragraph. This last sentence is a summarizing sentence which reverts to the Subject Sentence. Its function is that of the last state-

ment in the Proposition; it should show that the Subject Sentence has been developed and proved.

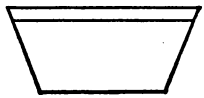
NOTICE. — In each case, the author's aim was *to prove* the Subject Sentence. The means he used were those which he found would most adequately do this.

13. **A Graphic Representation of the Paragraph.** — In order to make clear the importance of the Subject Sentence and its relation to the Paragraph, let us make use of the following illustration. A single line represents the cause of the existence of the Paragraph, namely, the Subject Sentence ————————.

Then before we begin abruptly to prove this statement, let us narrow the Subject Sentence slightly by explaining it or by repeating it in other words. This makes the approach to the Proof smooth and gradual.

The illustration becomes  . From this point, we begin *to prove* our *Subject Sentence*. To do this, we can imagine ourselves as pouring our thoughts into a funnel-shaped contrivance. Now our illustration becomes something like this. 

But right here, care must be taken, for we do not wish to have our material leak out, but rather we wish to prevent this very thing. Therefore we must have a last sentence, which must represent no more and no less than the accumulation of the thoughts poured in. In other words, this last sentence must be a summary sentence which will complete the Paragraph unit. The last step in the evolution may then be represented as follows: —



14. **Summary.** — From this chapter on the Importance of the Paragraph, we can draw the following conclusions: —

1. The Paragraph is the most important unit of prose.

2. As the whole composition is a development of a specific subject, the Paragraph is a complete development of a particular phase of the subject.

3. The Paragraph, then, can be called a complete essay in itself.

4. As an essay in itself, the Paragraph has a subject of its own which is the cause of the existence of the Paragraph.

5. The subject of the Paragraph is usually expressed in one sentence, called the Subject Sentence.

6. The Subject Sentence of the Paragraph is composed of two parts consisting of the *given material* and the facts or fundamental quality *to be proved true.*

7. The Subject Sentence is of first importance; it is the foundation upon which the Paragraph is erected.

8. Therefore, the position of the Subject Sentence should be first. Lay the foundation before you begin to build your house.

9. Remember you are a mechanic and must learn to handle your tools. Therefore learn your trade.

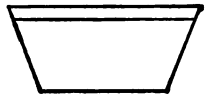
10. Inasmuch as the Subject Sentence is considered the foundation of the Paragraph, containing a fact or fundamental quality to be proved, then, the body of the Paragraph may be called the *Proof.*

11. Keep in mind the mathematical construction of the Paragraph and its Geometrical parallel.

12. Look at the Paragraph in a new light as a Geometry Proposition in which there is something *given*, something to *prove*, and a *proof.*

13. Hence, consider your Paragraph from a mechanic's

point of view. Conceive of it as definite in structure as a Geometry Proposition. Also keep before your mind this graphic representation.



Exercises

1. Read an article in the *Outlook* or the *Nation*. Give the subject of the article and the subject of each Paragraph.

2. From any ten paragraphs in your reading, select those in which the Subject Sentence is first.

3. Read a Paragraph of Description in *Ivanhoe*, *Silas Marner*, *The House of the Seven Gables*. Find the Subject Sentence. Notice whether or not the writer has made use of the most emphatic position in the Paragraph, namely, the first position.

4. Bring to class examples of Paragraphs which contain good Subject Sentences and well-developed Proofs. Have these discussed in class.

Let the teacher vary these exercises on Subject Sentences.

CHAPTER II

THE PERIOD OF IMITATION

1. The Meaning of the Term. — Let us stop and consider just what we mean by an Imitative Period. We mean that stage in the development of any art in which we lay emphasis upon the mechanics of the art, while we strive not to create and not to indulge our fancy, but rather to discover those means by which authors have brought themselves up to the artistic stage which is our ideal. In other words, our purpose must be to learn the secret of the trade before we can hope to add to it our own bit of originality or suggestion. In any art we pass through this period. The sculptor does not create until he has spent years in copying, in imitating the works of past masters, that he may discover the mechanical devices which have been the stiff and rigid framework of the artistic product. In painting, the artist copies and imitates his models first before he presumes to create from his own imagination. It is the stage that is not only a necessary but a natural step in the development of an art.

2. The Period of Imitation in the Art of Composition. — To the value of this period in the art of English Composition we can look back to the day of Benjamin Franklin. Franklin stands for a fine type of the "self-made" man, a man who rose from a state of poverty to that of affluence by utilizing the commonest means which surrounded him. Above all, he realized the importance of the art of writing

as the most practical means which would stimulate his own progress. He demanded a style which was at once clear, forceful, and simple. He made use of the material at hand. This material lay in the works of authors who had discovered the secret of clear, forceful, and simple writing. Franklin writes as follows in regard to a *Spectator Paper* of Addison: "I thought the writing excellent and wished if possible to imitate it. With this view, I took some of the papers, and, making short hints of the sentiment in each sentence, laid them by a few days, and then, without looking at the book, tried to compose the papers again, by expressing each hinted sentiment at length and as fully as it had been expressed before, in any suitable words that should come to hand. Then I compared my *Spectator* with the original, discovered some of my faults, and corrected them. I also sometimes jumbled my collections of hints into confusion, and after some weeks endeavored to reduce them into the best order before I began to form full sentences and complete the paper. This was to teach method in the arrangement of thoughts."

What was true of Franklin is true of us. We must regard written composition first as a trade, and as such we must study those means which other writers have considered the essential background of their own writing. If our aim is to cultivate a simple, clear, and forceful style of writing, we must use, as models, writers whose works are characterized by such a style. In other words, our aim must be to imitate first before we can create.

Exercise

Read *A College Magazine, Part I*, in *Memories and Portraits*, by Robert Louis Stevenson.

QUESTIONS ON THE READING

1. What was Stevenson's determination?
2. What was his earliest method to carry out this determination?
3. What does he mean by the words "ape that quality"?
4. What does he claim to be the advantage in thus imitating a model?
5. What proofs does he give that many great writers have passed through this period?
6. Does he believe it is possible for us to imitate *successfully* the writing of a great author?
7. What, then, are the advantages, do *you* think, of an Imitation Period in the art of Composition?

3. **The Meaning of Good Models.** — By good models, we mean those models of English expression whose style is worth imitating. We say we like the writings of a certain man, and when we ask ourselves *why*, the answer is, because he makes his meaning *clear*, and because he speaks in an language which is *simple*. Moreover, when we question ourselves further and ask why we remember what he has written, our answer is, because he has written, not only simply and clearly, but also with a certain amount of *emphasis* and *force*. Hence, inasmuch as our whole purpose in learning *how to write*, is to be able to make ourselves understood and to convey our meaning to others in such a way as to leave no doubt in the mind of the reader, our aim should be to cultivate a style *simple*, *clear*, and *forceful*. Let us begin by studying models of English prose whose style is that which we should endeavor to cultivate.

Exercise 1

Examine the following Paragraphs: —

1. Has the author expressed clearly his purpose in writing, — in other words, has he a Subject Sentence?

2. Has the author completely developed his Subject Sentence?

3. How has he made his Subject Sentence emphatic?

1. Laertes and Irus are neighbors, whose ways of living are an abomination to each other. Irus is moved by the fear of poverty, and Laertes by the shame of it. Though the motive of action is of so near affinity in both, and may be resolved into this, "That to each of them poverty is the greatest of all evils," yet their manners very widely differ. Shame of poverty makes Laertes launch into unnecessary equipage, vain expense, and lavish entertainments; fear of poverty makes Irus allow himself only plain necessaries, appear without a servant, sell his own corn, attend his laborers, and be himself a laborer. Shame of poverty makes Laertes go every day a step nearer to it, and fear of poverty stirs up Irus to make every day some further progress from it. — ADDISON: *The Shame and Dread of Poverty* in *Spectator Papers.*

2. Never since literature became a calling in England had it been a less gainful calling than at the time when Johnson took up his residence in London. In the preceding generation, a writer of eminent merit was sure to be munificently rewarded by the government. The least that he could expect was a pension or a sinecure place; and, if he showed any aptitude for politics, he might hope to be a member of parliament, lord of the treasury, an ambassador, a secretary of state. It would be easy, on the other hand, to name several writers of the nineteenth century of whom the least successful has received forty thousand pounds from the bookseller. But Johnson entered on his vocation in the most dreary part of the dreary interval which separated two ages of prosperity. Literature had ceased to flourish under the patronage of the great, and had not begun to flourish under the patronage of the public. One man of letters, indeed, Pope, had acquired by his pen what was then considered as a handsome fortune, and lived on footing of equality with nobles and ministers of state. But this was a solitary exception. Even an author whose reputation was established, and whose works were popular; such an author as Thomson, whose *Seasons* were in every library; such an author as Fielding whose *Pasquin* had had a greater run than any drama

since *The Beggar's Opera*, was sometimes glad to obtain, by pawning his overcoat, the means of dining on tripe at a cookshop underground where he could wipe his hands, after his greasy meal, on the back of a Newfoundland dog. It is easy, therefore, to imagine what humiliations and privations must have awaited the novice who had still to earn a name. One of the publishers to whom Johnson applied for employment, measured with a scornful eye that athletic, though uncouth frame, and exclaimed, "You had better get a porter's knot, and carry trunks." Nor was the advice bad; for a porter was likely to be as plentifully fed, and as comfortably lodged, as a poet. — MACAULAY: *Essay on Johnson.*

3. Sometimes a distant sail, gliding along the edge of the ocean, would be another theme of idle speculation. How interesting this fragment of a world, hastening to rejoin the great mass of existence. What a glorious monument of human invention, which has in a manner triumphed over wind and wave, has brought the ends of the world into communion, has established an interchange of blessings, pouring into the sterile regions of the north all the luxuries of the south, has diffused the light of knowledge and the charities of cultivated life, and has thus bound together those scattered portions of the human race between which nature seemed to have thrown an insurmountable barrier. — WASHINGTON IRVING: *The Voyage* in *The Sketch Book.*

4. From the listless repose of the place, and the peculiar character of its inhabitants, who are descendants from the original Dutch settlers, this sequestered glen has long been known by the name of "Sleepy Hollow," and its rustic lads are called the "Sleepy Hollow Boys" throughout all the neighboring country. A drowsy, dreamy influence seems to hang over the land, and to pervade the very atmosphere. Some say that the place was bewitched by a high German doctor during the early days of the settlement; others, that an old Indian chief, the prophet or wizard of his tribe, held his powwows there before the country was discovered by Master Hendrick Hudson. Certain it is, the place still continues under the sway of some witching power, that holds a spell over the minds of the good people, causing them to walk in a continual reverie. They are given to all kinds of marvelous beliefs; are subject to trances and visions; and frequently see strange sights, and hear music and voices in the air. The whole

neighborhood abounds with local tales, haunted spots, and twilight superstitions; stars shoot and meteors glare oftener across the valley than in any other part of the country; and the nightmare, with her whole ninefold, seems to make it the favorite scene of her gambols. — WASHINGTON IRVING: *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* in *The Sketch Book.*

5. On entering the amphitheater, new objects of wonder presented themselves. On a level spot in the center was a company of odd-looking personages playing at ninepins. They were dressed in a quaint outlandish fashion. Some wore short doublets; others, jerkins, with long knives in their belts; and most of them had enormous breeches, of similar style with that of the guide's. Their visages, too, were peculiar. One had a large head, broad face, and small, piggish eyes. The face of another seemed to consist entirely of nose, and was surmounted by a white sugar-loaf hat, set off with a little red cock's tail. They all had beards, of various shapes and colors. There was one who seemed to be the commander. He was a stout old gentleman, with a weather-beaten countenance. He wore a laced doublet, broad belt and hanger, high-crowned hat and feather, red stockings, and high-heeled shoes with roses in them. The whole group reminded Rip of the figures in an old Flemish painting in the parlor of Dominie Van Schaick, the village parson, and which had been brought over from Holland at the time of the settlement. — WASHINGTON IRVING: *Rip Van Winkle* in *The Sketch Book.*

Exercise 2

Bring to class examples of Paragraphs which are simple, clear, and forceful. In selecting your Paragraphs, ask yourself these questions: —

1. Has the writer expressed clearly his purpose in writing?
2. Find the sentence which expresses this purpose.
3. Does the writer give the sentence the first attention-attracting position?
4. If the writer has not made use of this first position, do you think the Paragraph has lost anything in clearness and force? In this case,

select the Subject Sentence, give it the first position, and compare the two Paragraphs.

5. Does the writer completely develop and prove his Subject Sentence?

4. The Process of Imitating Good Models. — It is evident, then, that we must study the underlying principles and structure of the model Paragraphs. To do this, we shall follow these six steps: —

A. Study the facts or details of the model Paragraph.

B. Select the author's own Subject Sentence.

C. Write the author's Subject Sentence as the *first* sentence of your own Paragraph.

D. Prove your Subject Sentence, without text.

E. Write your Paragraph from the material thus collected under *Step D*.

F. Compare your Paragraph with the model Paragraph.

Explanation. — In the first place, it is necessary to familiarize ourselves with the facts or details explained, narrated, or described in the Paragraph we are using as a model. The advantage of this step is that we are thus able to concentrate all our attention upon the *mechanical structure* of the Paragraph. Having *A* fully in mind, we pass on to *B*. In this step we select from the model Paragraph the author's own Subject Sentence. It may be his first sentence, it may be found elsewhere in the Paragraph, but as the essential element of step *C*, we must take his Subject Sentence, and write it down as the *first sentence*, the solid foundation of our own Paragraph. Without further reference to the model, proceed to step *D*, namely, prove this Subject Sentence. Write down the sentences as they occur to you which will help develop or prove the Subject Sentence. Arrange these sentences thus: —

Proof.

1. Sentence which helps prove the Subject Sentence.
2. Sentence which helps prove the Subject Sentence.
3. Sentence which helps prove the Subject Sentence.

etc.

In this step remember the aim should be to *prove the Subject Sentence*. *Step E* consists in writing into a Paragraph these sentences under *Step D*. In doing this follow the sentence order referred to in Chapter I, namely, —

Sentence 1. — Subject Sentence.

Sentence 2. — Subject Sentence repeated in other words, or otherwise explained.

Sentence 3. — First sentence in the Proof.

Sentence 4. — Second sentence in the Proof.

etc.

Last Sentence. — Summary sentence which must show that the Subject Sentence has been proved.

In thus incorporating into a Paragraph the work of *Step D*, look out for some simple connecting words which will link the sentences. Having written the Paragraph, you are ready to compare your own with the model. Such comparison should prove encouraging: *first*, it should convince you that these writers whose style is worth imitating were conscious of the necessity of a well and firmly constructed frame or foundation; *second*, it should also convince you that it is entirely possible for *you* to cultivate a style, simple, clear, and forceful, if you at first put all your emphasis upon the mechanical structure.

ILLUSTRATIVE PARAGRAPH TREATED ACCORDING TO THE SIX STEPS IN THE IMITATION PERIOD

Step A.

Let us select, as our model of clear, simple, and forceful expression, a Paragraph from Macaulay's *Essay on Johnson*, the Paragraph opening with these words: "*Never since literature became a calling in England had it been a less gainful calling than at the time when Johnson took up his residence in London.*" Let us become familiar with Macaulay's own facts in this Paragraph, in regard to the preceding, the succeeding, and Johnson's own age in London. It is essential that you know these facts before we can proceed to

Step B.

Here we select Macaulay's own Subject Sentence, which is the first sentence quoted above. In looking, however, through the Paragraph, we find another sentence which expresses equally well the same thought, — the sentence, " But Johnson entered on his vocation in the most dreary part of the dreary interval which separated two ages of prosperity." In examining this sentence, we find it to be practically a repetition of the sentence selected. Our aim now is to construct a Paragraph upon the foundation given us. Therefore, we transfer this foundation to the first line of our own theme paper. This constitutes

Step C.

Step D.

With this foundation of *Step C*, our aim is to prove the Subject Sentence. This leads us to *Step D.*

Subject Sentence. — Never since literature became a calling in England had it been a less gainful calling than at the time when Johnson took up his residence in London.

Given. — Literature, a calling in London; Johnson there.

To prove. — Never had literature been a less gainful calling than at this time.

Proof.

1. The preceding age of patronage would have helped and encouraged him.
2. On the other hand, the nineteenth century would have offered him the people's patronage.
3. But the eighteenth century separated these two ages of prosperity.
4. In this century, even authors of reputation like Thomson and Fielding had to struggle in order to live.
5. Then the man without fame like Johnson must have endured even greater hardships.

Summary. — From such a comparison of the eighteenth with the preceding and with the nineteenth century, it can easily be seen that at no time could Johnson have gone to London when literature as a profession had been less gainful.

Planning the Paragraph. — In order to incorporate into a Paragraph your work in *Step D*, look out for (1) Sentence Order, and (2) links between the sentences.

A review of the sentences in the Proof will call your attention to the facts just mentioned. Be sure that each is a perfectly constructed sentence, and be sure that each is hooked to the preceding, that the Paragraph itself may be a firmly linked series forming a perfect whole. Then follow the Sentence Order Plan referred to above in Chapter I.

Sentence 1. — Subject Sentence.

Sentence 2. — Subject Sentence repeated or explained.

Sentence 3. — First sentence in Proof.

Sentence 4. — Second sentence in Proof.

Sentence 5. — Third sentence in Proof.
Sentence 6. — Fourth sentence in Proof.
Sentence 7. — Fifth sentence in Proof.
Sentence 8. — *Summary sentence.*

Step E.

The Paragraph. — 1. Never since literature became a calling in London had it been a less gainful calling than when Johnson took up his residence in London. 2. (Subject Sentence repeated.) At no worse time could Johnson have gone to that city with expectation of earning a living by writing. (Proof, Sentence 1.) Had he gone in the preceding age, he might have expected help and encouragement from the nobles, for this age was one of patronage. (2 P.) On the other hand, had he gone in the nineteenth century, he would have received the patronage not of the nobles but of the people, and thus have made a large fortune. (3 P.) But as it was, Johnson entered upon his vocation in a dreary interval which separated these two ages of prosperity. (4 P.) In this eighteenth century, even authors of reputation, as Thomson, or Fielding, had to struggle for existence. (5 P.) Then it is easy to see that a man without fame and reputation must have endured even greater hardships at this time. (Summary Sentence.) So it appears from the comparison of the eighteenth century with the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries that at no worse time could Johnson have gone to London and be expected to earn a living in the literary profession.

Step F.

This Paragraph just written will compare very favorably with Macaulay's own Paragraph which reads as follows: —

Never since literature became a calling in England had it been a less gainful calling than at the time when Johnson took up his residence in London. In the preceding generation a writer of eminent merit was sure to be munificently rewarded by the government. The least that he could expect was a pension or a sinecure place; and, if he showed any aptitude for politics, he might hope to be a member of parliament, a lord of the treasury, an ambassador, a secretary of state. It would be easy, on the other hand, to name several writers of the nineteenth century of whom the least successful has received forty thousand pounds from the booksellers. But Johnson entered on his vocation in the most dreary part of the dreary interval which separated two ages of prosperity. Literature had ceased to flourish under the patronage of the great, and had not begun to flourish under the patronage of the public. One man of letters, indeed, Pope, had acquired by his pen what was then considered as a handsome fortune, and lived on a footing of equality with nobles and ministers of state. But this was a solitary exception. Even an author whose reputation was established, and whose works were popular, such an author as Thomson, whose *Seasons* were in every library; such an author as Fielding, whose *Pasquin* had had a greater run than any drama since *The Beggar's Opera*, was sometimes glad to obtain, by pawning his best coat, the means of dining on tripe at a cookshop underground, where he could wipe his hands, after his greasy meal, on the back of a Newfoundland dog. It is easy, therefore, to imagine what humiliations and privations must have awaited the novice who had still to earn a name. One of the publishers to whom Johnson applied for employment measured with a scornful eye that athletic though uncouth frame, and exclaimed, "You had better get a porter's knot, and carry trunks." Nor was the advice bad; for a porter was likely to be as plentifully fed, and as comfortably lodged, as a poet.

Illustrative Paragraph 2

Let us follow a Paragraph of *Description* through this same process. We will begin with *Step C*, namely, selecting the author's own Subject Sentence. —

PARAGRAPH — 4

"*From the listless repose of the place, and the peculiar character of its inhabitants, this sequestered glen has long been known by the name of Sleepy Hollow.*"

Then we proceed to *Step D.*

Given. — Sleepy Hollow, the listless repose, the peculiar character of its inhabitants.

To prove. — Sleepy Hollow acquired its name from (1) the listless repose of the place, (2) the peculiar character of its inhabitants.

Proof.

(1) Listless repose of the place.
   1. A drowsy influence hangs over the land.
   2. Possibly due to alleged old stories that the place was bewitched in the early days.

(2) Peculiar character of its inhabitants.
   1. They walk in continual reverie.
   2. They are given to all kinds of marvelous beliefs, trances, and visions.
   3. They see strange sights and hear strange voices.
   4. They are filled with tales in regard to superstitious spots, and believe that the place is the scene of nightmare gambols.

Summary. — From this dreary influence, then, which pervades the place, and from the peculiar character of its inhabitants, this sequestered glen can rightly be called Sleepy Hollow.

The Paragraph Written

Step E.

From the listless repose of the place and the peculiar character of its inhabitants . . . this sequestered glen has long been known by the name of "Sleepy Hollow," and its rustic lads are called the "Sleepy

Hollow Boys" throughout all the neighboring country. The name of this little spot has been truly earned by virtue of its own nature and that of the people who live in it. Indeed, a drowsy influence seems to hang over the land and lend a peculiar charm to it. Such an atmosphere may be due to the fact that according to old stories, the spot was bewitched years ago either by an old German doctor, or by an Indian chief. Whatever may be the cause, it is true that the people seem to walk in a continual reverie. More than this, they are given to all kinds of marvelous beliefs, trances, and visions. They see strange sights and hear weird voices in the air. So filled with superstitious stories are these people that the whole place is believed to be the scene of the nightmare and her fold in their midnight gambols. Thus the name of "Sleepy Hollow" justly characterizes this place of peculiar drowsy atmosphere and peculiar people.

Illustrative Paragraph

Subject Sentence. — *"Sometimes a distant sail gliding along the edge of the ocean would be another theme for idle speculation."*

Given. — A distant sail gliding along the edge of the ocean.

To prove. — This sail would be a theme for *idle speculation.*

Proof. — The observer would meditate thus as he contemplated this ship.

1. It appeared to him as a fragment of a world on its way to rejoin the great mass of existence.
2. It would appear to him as a glorious monument of human invention which had thus been able to bring together the north and the south, by interchanging blessings and diffusing knowledge.
3. It would appear as the link of the world bounding scattered portions of the human race, between which nature seemed to have thrown an insurmountable barrier.

Summary. — Such thoughts as these passed through his mind as he contemplated the ship on the horizon.

5. General Conclusions. — From the analysis of some paragraphs which we can consider worth imitating on account of their simple, clear, and forceful style, we can conclude that there lies some efficiency in treating the Paragraph as a Geometry Proposition. In this scheme, we have at least a definite knowledge of what we are working with, and what our aim is to be, forming together the first steps of English Composition. We must, however, admit that the artist comes in time to hold himself less strictly to the rigid mathematical scheme described. This variation is noticed in the position which he chooses for his Subject Sentence; he may lead up to his main statement by making it the last sentence; he may introduce it after an introductory sentence or two. It is interesting to notice just where he does put it as serving his best advantage. On the other hand, we have in our favor many writers who lay it as the solid foundation and build from it, aiming above all to prove this statement. It is on this basis that the Geometry parallel is helpful.

You can never learn to express yourself simply, clearly, and forcefully unless you are always aware of the fact that you are not an artist but a craftsman, and that you must follow the simplest scheme which will tend to mold your thoughts along scholarly lines. Therefore, in this period as in all others, *your Subject Sentence must be the foundation of your Paragraph.*

Therefore remember: —

1. It is evident that these Paragraphs easily adapt themselves to the mechanical and mathematical scheme of the Geometry Proposition.

2. It is, therefore, evident that mechanical structure is of first importance.

3. It is also evident, that the success of a perfectly developed Paragraph lies in the firm foundation called the Subject Sentence, the aim being *To Prove* this statement, in the perfectly developed Proof of this Subject Sentence.

Hence, make your one aim for the purpose, *Structure, a Structurally perfect Paragraph.*

6. Importance of Repeating the Subject Sentence. — As the second sentence in the Paragraph, repeat the Subject Sentence. The importance of this step may lie in one of the following reasons, in two of them, or in all of them.

First. — The Subject Sentence, selected, as it is, directly from the author's own Paragraph, may need some explanation for the reader. For instance, suppose the Paragraph you are imitating is the one in which is this Subject Sentence, "Though his pen was now idle, his tongue was active." To whom does his pen refer? And what is meant by *now?* A second sentence here is necessary to explain the Subject Sentence.

Second. — The very act of repeating in your own words the words of the author as expressed in the Subject Sentence gives you the opportunity of understanding completely the sentence you are going to prove. You will not miss the important words in the sentence. For example, suppose your Subject Sentence, "*On entering the amphitheater new objects of wonder presented themselves.*" The repetition of that sentence necessitates you to call before your mind an amphitheater and to give either another word for it, or to describe briefly the nature of the place. Moreover, you will find the word *wonder* must not be lost sight of. Or take,

for example, Irving's Paragraph, "*It was, as I have said, a fine, autumnal day.*" The repetition of that sentence makes you observe that little, but important word, *fine*. So by thus repeating in your own words the Subject Sentence of the author, you are more or less making the sentence your own and giving to it your own bit of individuality.

Third. — The importance of this repetition lies in the fact that inasmuch as your own repetition or explanation of the sentence is bound to be in simpler terms, you have thereby begun to narrow the Subject Sentence. This narrowing process makes less abrupt the descent into the Proof, and forms this part in the evolution of the Paragraph, described in Chapter I.

Subject Sentence = ——————.

Subject Sentence = ⊔————————⊓.

On account, then, of these reasons, *do not attempt to prove your Subject Sentence until you have carefully examined every word, that you may not lose any, and have repeated in your words the Subject Sentence of the author whose Paragraph you are imitating.*

7. **The Links between the Sentences.** — An important part of the act of incorporating into a Paragraph the sentences in the Proof lies in the words, small, but very valuable, which thus serve to make a perfect chain of sentences for the perfect paragraph unit.

In this Period, the most available means of acquiring these small words is to notice just what are the links which the author himself has used. Turn to the Paragraph referred to above. "Never since literature became a calling had it been a less gainful calling than when Johnson took up his

residence in London." Follow the sentences in the Paragraph: (1) *In the preceding age;* (2) It would be easy, *on the other hand;* (3) *But Johnson;* (4) One man, *indeed;* (5) *But* this was a solitary exception; (6) *Even* an author; (7) It is easy, *therefore*, etc. Keep in your mind that the sentences are links in a solid firm chain.

Therefore, in this early Period use the same links, if you so choose, that exist in the Paragraph you are imitating.

8. Comments on the Works of this Period. — *Foreword.*

I. The following Paragraphs of the expository type are selected from essays included in the College Requirements. These selections may serve as illustrations of the general method for carrying on the work. The range is limitless, but it is advocated that the Imitation models be selected from the Requirements for the reasons that by these means a closer correlation between the two branches of Literature and Compositions is thus brought about.

II. The closer correlation between the Composition and Works to be studied is advocated for the following reasons:—

1. The pupil is bound to realize the worth of these essays from a point of view of structure.

2. If this point is realized, the *thought* of the essay is bound to be clearer.

To bring about these ends, it is urged that the work be carried on as follows: (1) a theme book should contain these Paragraphs. (2) These Paragraphs should be written daily in class in a period of 5 to 10 minutes,—steps *A*, *B*, *C* having been prepared outside; the Paragraph itself written in class upon the *author's own Subject Sentence.* (3) These daily Paragraphs thus based upon the work studied at the time

should form a series which will prove most valuable for review work.

III. *Remember:* —

(1) A structurally perfect Paragraph should be insisted upon. The Paragraph is either right or wrong from this point of view and should be marked accordingly.

(2) Underline the Subject Sentence that it may stand out as clearly as the Subject of a Composition.

(3) Aim for *perfection in Structure.* Hence, follow the steps for the Imitation Period.

9. **The Double Process of Procedure.** — Throughout these exercises in this Imitation Period, there is a double process, consisting of the following steps, —

I. Analyze each of the following Paragraphs into the four groups: —

A. Subject Sentence.

B. Material Given.

C. Material To Prove.

D. Proof.

II. Develop into a Paragraph, according to the following steps: —

A. Write the author's Subject Sentence as your first sentence.

B. Follow the usual steps of Paragraph development, proceeding without your book.

These two processes will thus constitute a complete analysis of the Paragraphs to be imitated, and should impress upon you the perfect structure which underlies artistic writing, and also should impress you with the necessity of paying all attention to your Paragraphs from the point of view of structure.

10. **Expository Paragraphs.** —

A. Reduce to its lowest terms the following Paragraphs of Exposition. Process 1.

B. Reproduce into a Paragraph according to Process 2.

ILLUSTRATIVE PARAGRAPHS. — PROCESS 1

The following Paragraphs analyzed into the groups mentioned will serve as illustrations of the method of procedure.

Paragraph 1.

Subject Sentence. — *"From these circumstances, I have thought that there is some inconsistency in our common mode of teaching language."*

Given. — The common mode of teaching language.

To prove. — In this mode of teaching language, there is some inconsistency.

Proof. — Some inconsistency in the common mode of teaching language (Second Sentence — explanation of the above).

1. It is true that if you can clamber and get to the top of a staircase without using the steps, you will more easily gain them in descending.

2. But if you begin with the lowest, you will more easily ascend to the top.

3. Therefore, since many quit Latin after spending some years without any great proficiency, would it not be better to begin with the simplest language, French?

4. In this case, if they should never arrive at Latin, they would at least have acquired a language that would be serviceable in common life.

Summary. — So it seems that the inconsistency in the common mode of teaching languages lies in the fact that the hardest language is taught first, whereas decided advantages arise if French were taught first.

ILLUSTRATIVE PARAGRAPH 2. — PROCESS 1

Subject Sentence. — *"It was an odd thing to find an Oxford scholar in the situation of a bought servant."*

Given. — An Oxford scholar in the situation of a bought servant.

To prove. — Such a situation was an odd thing.

Proof. — Such a situation an odd thing.

Reasons. 1.
2.
3.
4.
etc.

Summary.

Complete the above.

Exercise

Apply Process 1 to each of the following expository Paragraphs, then carry out Process 2 in regard to each.

1. It had been generally supposed that this great work would be dedicated to the eloquent and accomplished nobleman to whom the prospectus had been addressed. He well knew the value of such a compliment; and therefore, when the day of publication drew near, he exerted himself to soothe, by a show of zealous and at the same time of delicate and judicious kindness, the pride which he had so cruelly wounded. Since the *Ramblers* had ceased to appear, the town had been entertained by a journal called *The World*, to which many men of high rank and fashion contributed. In two successive numbers of *The World* the Dictionary was, to use the modern phrase, puffed with wonderful skill. The writings of Johnson were warmly praised. It was proposed that he should be invested with the authority of a Dictator, nay, of a Pope, over our language, and that his decisions about the meaning and the spelling of words should be received as final.

His two folios, it was said, would of course be bought by everybody who could afford to buy them. It was soon known that these papers were written by Chesterfield. But the just resentment of Johnson was not to be so appeased. In a letter written with singular energy and dignity of thought and language, he repelled the tardy advances of his patron. The Dictionary came forth without a dedication. In the preface the author truly declared that he owed nothing to the great, and described the difficulties with which he had been left to struggle so forcibly and pathetically, that the ablest and most malevolent of all the enemies of his fame, Horne Tooke, never could read that passage without tears. — MACAULAY: *Essay on Johnson.*

2. To the influence which Addison derived from his literary talents was added all the influence which arises from character. The world, always ready to think the worst of needy political adventurers, was forced to make one exception. Restlessness, violence, audacity, laxity of principle, are the vices ordinarily attributed to that class of men. But faction itself could not deny that Addison had, through all changes of fortune, been strictly faithful to his early opinions, and to his early friends; that his integrity was without stain; that his whole deportment indicated a fine sense of the becoming; that, in the utmost heat of controversy, his zeal was tempered by a regard for truth, humanity, and social decorum; that no outrage could ever provoke him to retaliation unworthy of a Christian and a gentleman; and that his only faults were a too sensitive delicacy, and a modesty which amounted to bashfulness. — MACAULAY: *Essay on Addison.*

3. There are croakers in every country, always boding its ruin. Such a one then lived in Philadelphia; a person of note, an elderly man, with a wise look and a very grave manner of speaking; his name was Samuel Mickle. This gentleman, a stranger to me, stopped one day at my door, and asked me if I was the young man who had lately opened a new printing-house. Being answered in the affirmative, he said he was sorry for me, because it was an expensive undertaking, and the expense would be lost; for Philadelphia was a sinking place, the people already half-bankrupts, or near being so; all appearances to the contrary, such as new buildings and the rise of rents, being of his certain knowledge fallacious; for they were, in fact, among the things that would soon ruin us. And he gave me such a detail of

misfortunes now existing, or that were soon to exist, that he left me half melancholy. Had I known him before I engaged in this business, probably I never should have done it. This man continued to live in this decaying place, and to declaim in the same strain, refusing for many years to buy a house there, because all was going to destruction; and at last I had the pleasure of seeing him give five times as much for one as he might have bought it for when he first began his croaking. — BENJAMIN FRANKLIN: *Autobiography.*

4. A few weeks after Johnson had entered on these obscure labors, he published a work which at once placed him high among the writers of his age. It is probable that what he had suffered during his first year in London had often reminded him of some parts of that noble poem in which Juvenal has described the misery and degradation of a needy man of letters, lodged among the pigeons' nests in the tottering garrets which overhung the streets of Rome. Pope's admirable imitations of Horace's *Satires* and *Epistles* had recently appeared, were in every hand, and were by many readers thought superior to the originals. What Pope had done for Horace, Johnson aspired to do for Juvenal. The enterprise was bold, and yet judicious. For between Johnson and Juvenal there was much in common, much more certainly than between Pope and Horace. — MACAULAY: *Essay on Johnson.*

5. I must record one trait of this good man's character. He had formerly been in business at Bristol, but failed in debt to a number of people, compounded and went to America. There, by a close application to business as a merchant, he acquired a plentiful fortune in a few years. Returning to England in the ship with me, he invited his old creditors to an entertainment, at which he thanked them for the easy composition they had favored him with, and, when they expected nothing but the treat, every man at the first remove found under his plate an order on a banker for the full amount of the unpaid remainder with interest. — BENJAMIN FRANKLIN: *Autobiography.*

6. Finding the advantage of this little collection, I proposed to render the benefit from books more common, by commencing a public subscription library. I drew a sketch of the plan and rules that would be necessary, and got a skillful conveyancer, Mr. Charles Brockden,

to put the whole in form of articles of agreement to be subscribed, by which each subscriber engaged to pay a certain sum down for the first purchase of books, and an annual contribution for increasing them. So few were the readers at that time in Philadelphia, and the majority of us so poor, that I was not able, with great industry, to find more than fifty persons, mostly young tradesmen, willing to pay down for this purpose forty shillings each, and ten shillings per annum. On this little fund we began. The books were imported; the library was opened one day in the week for lending to the subscribers, on their promissory notes to pay double the value if not duly returned. The institution soon manifested its utility, was imitated by other towns, and in other provinces. The libraries were augmented by donations; reading became fashionable; and our people, having no public amusements to divert their attention from study, became better acquainted with books, and in a few years were observed by strangers to be better instructed and more intelligent than people of the same rank generally are in other countries. — BENJAMIN FRANKLIN: *Autobiography.*

7. It was about this time I conceived the bold and arduous project of arriving at moral perfection. I wished to live without committing any fault at any time; I would conquer all that either natural inclination, custom, or company might lead me into. As I knew, or thought I knew, what was right and wrong, I did not see why I might not always do the one and avoid the other. But I soon found I had undertaken a task of more difficulty than I had imagined. While my care was employed in guarding against one fault, I was often surprised by another; habit took the advantage of inattention; inclination was sometimes too strong for reason. I concluded, at length, that the mere speculative conviction that it was our interest to be completely virtuous, was not sufficient to prevent our slipping; and that the contrary habits must be broken, and good ones acquired and established, before we can have any dependence on a steady, uniform rectitude of conduct. For this purpose I therefore contrived the following method. —BENJAMIN FRANKLIN: *Autobiography.*

8. From these circumstances, I have thought that there is some inconsistency in our common mode of teaching languages. We are told that it is proper to begin first with the Latin, and, having acquired that, it will be more easy to attain those modern languages

which are derived from it; and yet we do not begin with the Greek, in order more easily to acquire the Latin. It is true that, if you can clamber and get to the top of a staircase without using the steps, you will more easily gain them in descending; but certainly, if you begin with the lowest, you will with more ease ascend to the top; and I would therefore offer it to the consideration of those who superintend the education of our youth, whether, since many of those who begin with the Latin quit the same after spending some years without having made any great proficiency, and what they have learnt becomes almost useless, so that their time has been lost, it would not have been better to have begun with the French, proceeding to the Italian, etc.; for, though, after spending the same time, they should quit the study of languages and never arrive at the Latin, they would, however, have acquired another tongue or two, that, being in modern use, might be serviceable to them in common life. — BENJAMIN FRANKLIN: *Autobiography.*

9. It was an odd thing to find an Oxford scholar in the situation of a bought servant. He was not more than eighteen years of age, and gave me this account of himself; that he was born in Gloucester, educated at a grammar school there, had been distinguished among the scholars for some apparent superiority in performing his part, when they exhibited plays; belonged to the Witty Club there, and had written some pieces in prose and verse, which were printed in the Gloucester newspapers; thence he was sent to Oxford; where he continued about a year, but not well satisfied, wishing of all things to see London, and become a player. At length, receiving his quarterly allowance of fifteen guineas, instead of discharging his debts he walked out of town, hid his gown in a furze bush, and footed it to London, where, having no friends to advise him, he fell into bad company, soon spent his guineas, found no means of being introduced among the players, grew necessitous, pawned his clothes, and wanted bread. Walking the street very hungry, and not knowing what to do with himself, a crimp's bill was put into his hand, offering immediate entertainment and encouragement to such as would bind themselves to serve in America. He went directly, signed the indentures, was put into the ship, and came over, never writing a line to acquaint his friends what was become of him. He was lively, witty, good-natured, and

a pleasant companion, but idle, thoughtless, and imprudent to the last degree. — BENJAMIN FRANKLIN: *Autobiography.*

10. Of other assailants Johnson took no notice whatever. He had early resolved never to be drawn into controversy; and he adhered to his resolution with a steadfastness which is the more extraordinary, because he was, both intellectually and morally, of the stuff of which controversialists are made. In conversation, he was a singularly eager, acute, and pertinacious disputant. When at a loss for good reasons, he had recourse to sophistry; and, when heated by altercation, he made unsparing use of sarcasm and invective. But, when he took his pen in his hand, his whole character seemed to be changed. A hundred bad writers misrepresented him and reviled him; but not one of the hundred could boast of having been thought by him worthy of a refutation, or even of a retort. The Kenricks, Campbells, MacNicols, and Hendersons, did their best to annoy him, in the hope that he would give them importance by answering them. But the reader will in vain search his works for any allusion to Kenrick or Campbell, to MacNicol or Henderson. One Scotchman, bent on vindicating the fame of Scotch learning, defied him to the combat in a detestable Latin hexameter:

Maxime, si tu vis, cupio contendere tecum.

But Johnson took no notice of the challenge. He had learned, both from his own observation and from literary history, in which he was deeply read, that the place of books in the public estimation is fixed, not by what is written about them, but by what is written in them; and that an author whose works are likely to live is very unwise if he stoops to wrangle with detractors whose works are certain to die. He always maintained that fame was a shuttlecock which could be kept up only by being beaten back, as well as beaten forward, and which would soon fall if there were only one battledore. No saying was oftener in his mouth than that fine apothegm of Bentley, that no man was ever written down but by himself. — MACAULAY: *Essay on Johnson.*

11. It will be remarked that, though my scheme was not wholly without religion, there was in it no mark of any of the distinguishing tenets of any particular sect. I had purposely avoided them; for,

being fully persuaded of the utility and excellency of my method, and that it might be serviceable to people in all religions, and intending some time or other to publish it, I would not have anything in it that should prejudice any one, of any sect, against it. I purposed writing a little comment on each virtue, in which I would have shown the advantages of possessing it, and the mischiefs attending its opposite vice; and I should have called my book THE ART OF VIRTUE, because it would have shown the means and manner of obtaining virtue, which would have distinguished it from the mere exhortation to be good, that does not instruct and indicate the means, but is like the apostle's man of verbal charity, who only without showing to the naked and hungry how or where they might get clothes or victuals, exhorted them to be fed and clothed (*James* ii. 15, 16).

But it so happened that my intention of writing and publishing this comment was never fulfilled. I did, indeed, from time to time, put down short hints of the sentiments, reasonings, etc., to be made use of in it, some of which I have still by me; but the necessary close attention to private business in the earlier part of my life, and public business since, have occasioned my postponing it; for, it being connected in my mind with *a great and extensive project*, that required the whole man to execute, and which an unforeseen succession of employs prevented my attending to, it has hitherto remained unfinished. — BENJAMIN FRANKLIN: *Autobiography.*

12. Among the members of this celebrated body was one to whom it has owed the greater part of its celebrity, yet who was regarded with little respect by his brethren, and had not without difficulty obtained a seat among them. This was James Boswell, a young Scotch lawyer, heir to an honorable name and a fair estate. That he was a coxcomb and a bore, weak, vain, pushing, curious, garrulous, was obvious to all who were acquainted with him. That he could not reason, that he had no wit, no humor, no eloquence, is apparent from his writings. And yet his writings are read beyond the Mississippi, and under the Southern Cross, and are likely to be read as long as the English exists, either as a living or as a dead language. Nature had made him a slave and an idolater. His mind resembled those creepers which the botanists call parasites, and which can subsist only by clinging round the stems and imbibing the juices of stronger

plants. He must have fastened himself on somebody. He might have fastened himself on Wilkes, and have become the fiercest patriot in the Bill of Rights Society. He might have fastened himself on Whitefield, and have become the loudest field preacher among the Calvinistic Methodists. In a happy hour he fastened himself on Johnson. The pair might seem ill matched. For Johnson had early been prejudiced against Boswell's country. To a man of Johnson's strong understanding and irritable temper, the silly egotism and adulation of Boswell must have been as teasing as the constant buzz of a fly. Johnson hated to be questioned; and Boswell was eternally catechising him on all kinds of subjects, and sometimes propounded such questions as, "What would you do, sir, if you were locked up in a tower with a baby?" Johnson was a water-drinker; and Boswell was a wine-bibber, and indeed little better than a habitual sot. It was impossible that there should be perfect harmony between two such companions. Indeed, the great man was sometimes provoked into fits of passion, in which he said things which the small man, during a few hours, seriously resented. Every quarrel, however, was soon made up. During twenty years the disciple continued to worship the master: the master continued to scold the disciple, to sneer at him, and to love him. The two friends ordinarily resided at a great distance from each other. Boswell practiced in the Parliament House of Edinburgh, and could pay only occasional visits to London. During those visits his chief business was to watch Johnson, to discover all Johnson's habits, to turn the conversation to subjects about which Johnson was likely to say something remarkable, and to fill quarto notebooks with minutes of what Johnson had said. In this way were gathered the materials out of which was afterward constructed the most interesting biographical work in the world. — MACAULAY: *Essay on Johnson.*

13. It is not strange that the success of the *Spectator* should have been such as no similar work has ever obtained. The number of copies daily distributed was at first three thousand. It subsequently increased, and had risen to near four thousand when the stamp tax was imposed. That tax was fatal to a crowd of journals. The *Spectator*, however, stood its ground, doubled its price, and, though its circulation fell off, still yielded a large revenue both to the state and to

the authors. For particular papers, the demand was immense; of some, it is said, twenty thousand copies were required. But this was not all. To have the *Spectator* served up every morning with bohea and rolls was a luxury for the few. The majority were content to wait till essays enough had appeared to form a volume. Ten thousand copies of each volume were immediately taken off, and new editions were called for. It must be remembered, that the population of England was then hardly a third of what it now is. The number of Englishmen who were in the habit of reading was probably not a sixth of what it now is. A shopkeeper or a farmer who found any pleasure in literature was a rarity. Nay, there was doubtless more than one knight of the shire whose country seat did not contain ten books, receipt books and books on farriery included. In these circumstances, the sale of the *Spectator* must be considered as indicating a popularity quite as great as that of the most successful works of Sir Walter Scott and Mr. Dickens in our own time. — MACAULAY: *Essay on Addison.*

11. **Description.** — *A.* Reduce to its lowest terms, namely, into the various groups, the following Paragraphs of Description. Process 1.

B. After the above process is completed, reproduce into a Paragraph following the usual steps of Paragraph development. Process 2.

ILLUSTRATIVE PARAGRAPH 1. — PROCESS 1

Subject Sentence. — "*The sequestered situation of this church seems always to have made it a favorite haunt of troubled spirits.*"

Given. — (1) The sequestered situation of the church, (2) a favorite haunt of troubled spirits.

To prove. — (1) is the cause of (2).

Proof. — The sequestered situation of the church, responsible for (2).

1. The church stands on a knoll surrounded by locust trees and lofty elms.

2. From the knoll descends a gentle slope to a sheet of water bordered by high trees.
3. So quiet is it there, that the sunbeams sleep undisturbed.
4. etc.

Finish the above.

Summary.

ILLUSTRATIVE PARAGRAPH 2. — PROCESS 1

Subject Sentence. — "*Whoever has made a voyage up the Hudson must remember the Catskill Mountains.*"

Given. — A person who has made a trip up the Hudson, the Catskill Mountains.

To prove. — One who has seen them cannot fail to remember them.

Proof.

1. They are seen to the west of the river, swelling up to a noble height and lording it over the surrounding country.
2. They are particularly noticeable because of the change in the lines and shapes which vary with every change in the weather and season.
3. In clear weather, clothed in blue and purple, they print their bold outlines on the clear sky.
4. Sometimes, too, they will gather a hood of gray vapors about their summits, and in the last rays of the setting sun, will glow and light up like a crown of glory.

Summary. — On account, then, of their height, their commanding position, and their beauty, it is impossible for one who has ever made a trip up the Hudson to forget the Catskill Mountains.

Illustrative Paragraph 3. — Process 1

Subject Sentence. — "*The mirth of the company was greatly promoted by the humors of an eccentric personage, whom Mr. Bracebridge always addressed with the quaint appellation of Master Simon.*"

Given. — (1) The mirth of the company, (2) the humors of an eccentric personage, Master Simon.

To prove. — (1) was greatly promoted by (2).

Proof.

1. Master Simon's appearance would, indeed, increase the mirth of the company. (Description of him here.)
2. His wit was another cause of increasing the merriment; he dealt in sly jokes, etc. (Illustrations here.)
3. At supper, etc.
4. He really must have seemed wonderful to the young people for his accomplishment consisted in . . . etc.

Summary. — Thus it was that this eccentric little Master Simon by his ridiculous appearance and by his wit caused the party to be even more jolly than ever.

Complete the work indicated.

Illustrative Paragraph 4. — Process 1

Subject Sentence. — "*When he entered the house, the conquest of his heart was complete.*"

Given. — Ichabod, in the house.

To prove. — The conquest of his heart was complete.

Proof. — The conquest of his heart was complete.

1. The outside appearance of the house had *almost* won his heart. (Description here.)
2. But when he left the piazza and entered the house, he was completely overcome.
3. Rows of pewter dazzled his eye.
4. Etc.

Finish the Proof.

Summary.

Complete the work indicated.

Illustrative Paragraph 5. — Process 1

Subject Sentence. — "*It was, as I have said, a fine autumnal day.*

Given. — A fine, autumnal day.

To prove. — It was such a day, — *fine and autumnal.*

Proof. — Fine and autumnal.

1. The sky was clear and serene, and nature wore that rich and golden livery which we always associate with the idea of abundance.
2. The forests were clear in autumn's colors, — sober brown and yellow.
3. Some trees that had been nipped by the first frost of the autumn into brilliant dyes of orange, purple, and scarlet.
4. Streaming files of wild ducks were visible in the air; the squirrel's bark and the pensive whistle of the quail could be heard in the stubble field.

Summary. — Such sights and sounds as these give us a good picture of a fine autumnal day.

Note. — In as simple a sentence as is given above, every word in the description has a special significance, in helping *to prove* that the day was both *fine* and *autumnal.*

Exercise

Carry out Processes 1 and 2 in regard to each of the following paragraphs.

1. I had expected to see a sleek, well-conditioned pastor, such as is often found in a snug living in the vicinity of a rich patron's table, but I was disappointed. The parson was a little, meager, black-looking man, with a grizzled wig that was too wide, and stood off from each ear, so that his head seemed to have shrunk away within it, like a dried filbert in its shell. He wore a rusty coat, with great skirts, and pockets that would have held the church Bible and Prayer Book; and his small legs seemed still smaller, from being planted in large shoes decorated with enormous buckles. — WASHINGTON IRVING: *Christmas Day* in *The Sketch Book*.

2. We had now come in full view of the old family mansion partly thrown in deep shadow, and partly lit up by the cold moonshine. It was an irregular building of some magnitude, and seemed to be of the architecture of different periods. One wing was evidently very ancient, with heavy stone-shafted bow-windows jutting out and overrun with ivy, from among the foliage of which the small, diamond-shaped panes of glass glittered with the moonbeams. The rest of the house was in the French taste of Charles II's time, having been repaired and altered, as my friend told me, by one of his ancestors, who returned with that monarch at the Restoration. The grounds about the house were laid out in the old formal manner of artificial flower-beds, clipped shrubberies, raised terraces, and heavy stone balustrades, ornamented with urns, a leaden statue or two, and a jet of water. The old gentleman, I was told, was extremely careful to preserve this obsolete finery in all its original state. He admired this fashion in gardening: it had an air of magnificence, was courtly and noble, and befitting good old family style. The boasted imitation of nature in modern gardening had sprung up with modern republican notions, but did not suit a monarchical government: it smacked of the leveling system. I could not help smiling at this introduction of politics into gardening, though I expressed some apprehension that I should find the old gentleman rather intolerant in his creed. Frank assured

me, however, that it was almost the only instance in which he had ever heard his father meddle with politics; and he believed he had got this notion from a member of Parliament who once passed a few weeks with him. The Squire was glad of any argument to defend his clipped yew trees and formal terraces, which had been occasionally attacked by modern landscape gardeners. — WASHINGTON IRVING: *Christmas Eve* in *The Sketch Book.*

3. While the mutual greetings were going on between young Bracebridge and his relatives, I had time to scan the apartment. I have called it a hall, for so it had certainly been in old times, and the Squire had evidently endeavored to restore it to something of its primitive state. Over the heavy projecting fireplace was suspended a picture of a warrior in armor, standing by a white horse; and on the opposite wall hung a helmet, buckler, and lance. At one end an enormous pair of antlers were inserted in the wall, the branches serving as hooks on which to suspend hats, whips, and spurs; and in the corners of the apartment were fowling-pieces, fishing-rods, and other sporting implements. The furniture was of the cumbrous workmanship of former days, though some articles of modern convenience had been added, and the oaken floor had been carpeted; so that the whole presented an odd mixture of parlor and hall. — WASHINGTON IRVING: *Christmas Eve* in *The Sketch Book.*

4. I passed some time in Poets' Corner, which occupies an end of one of the transepts or cross aisles of the Abbey. The monuments are generally simple, for the lives of literary men afford no striking themes for the sculptor. Shakespeare and Addison have statues erected to their memories; but the greater part have busts, medallions, and sometimes mere inscriptions. Notwithstanding the simplicity of these memorials, I have always observed that the visitors to the Abbey remain longest about them. A kinder and fonder feeling takes place of that cold curiosity or vague admiration with which they gaze on the splendid monuments of the great and the heroic. They linger about these as about the tombs of friends and companions; for, indeed, there is something of companionship between the author and the reader. Other men are known to posterity only through the medium of history, which is continually growing faint and obscure; but the intercourse between the author and his fellow-men is ever new

active, and immediate. He has lived for them more than for himself; he has sacrificed surrounding enjoyments, and shut himself up from the delights of social life, that he might the more intimately commune with distant minds and distant ages. Well may the world cherish his renown; for it has been purchased, not by deeds of violence and blood, but by the diligent dispensation of pleasure. Well may posterity be grateful to his memory; for he has left it an inheritance, not of empty names and sounding actions, but whose treasures of wisdom, bright gems of thought, and golden veins of language. — WASHINGTON IRVING: *Westminster Abbey* in *The Sketch Book*.

5. I think you may like to know something of his person and character. He had an excellent constitution of body, was of middle stature, but well set, and very strong; he was ingenious, could draw prettily, was skilled a little in music, and had a clear pleasing voice, so that when he played psalm tunes on his violin and sung withal, as he sometimes did in an evening after the business of the day was over, it was extremely agreeable to hear. He had a mechanical genius too, and, on occasion, was very handy in the use of other tradesmen's tools; but his great excellence lay in a sound understanding and solid judgment in prudential matters, both in private and public affairs. In the latter, indeed, he was never employed, the numerous family he had to educate and the straitness of his circumstances keeping him close to his trade; but I remember well his being frequently visited by leading people, who consulted him for his opinion in affairs of the town or of the church he belonged to, and showed a good deal of respect for his judgment and advice: he was also much consulted by private persons about their affairs when any difficulty occurred, and frequently chosen an arbitrator between contending parties. At his table he liked to have, as often as he could, some sensible friend or neighbor to converse with, and always took care to start some ingenious or useful topic for discourse, which might tend to improve the minds of his children. By this means he turned our attention to what was good, just, and prudent in the conduct of life; and little or no notice was ever taken of what related to the victuals on the table, whether it was well or ill dressed, in or out of season, of good or bad flavor, preferable or inferior to this or that other thing of the kind, so that I was brought up in such a perfect inattention to those matters

as to be quite indifferent what kind of food was set before me, and so unobservant of it, that to this day if I am asked I can scarce tell a few hours after dinner what I dined upon. This has been a convenience to me in traveling, where my companions have been sometimes very unhappy for want of a suitable gratification of their more delicate, because better instructed, tastes and appetites. — BENJAMIN FRANKLIN: *Autobiography.*

6. I had now come in sight of the house. It is a large building of brick, with stone quoins, and is in the Gothic style of Queen Elizabeth's day, having been built in the first year of her reign. The exterior remains very nearly in its original state, and may be considered a fair specimen of the residence of a wealthy country gentleman of those days. A great gateway opens from the park into a kind of courtyard in front of the house, ornamented with a grassplot, shrubs, and flower beds. The gateway is in imitation of the ancient barbican, being a kind of outpost, and flanked by towers, though evidently for mere ornament instead of defence. The front of the house is completely in the old style, with stone-shafted casements, a great bow window of heavy stonework, and a portal with armorial bearings over it, carved in stone. At each corner of the building is an octagon tower, surmounted by a gilt ball and weathercock. — WASHINGTON IRVING: *Stratford-on-Avon* in *The Sketch Book.*

7. Whoever has made a voyage up the Hudson must remember the Catskill Mountains. They are a dismembered branch of the great Appalachian family, and are seen away to the west of the river, swelling up to a noble height, and lording it over the surrounding country. Every change of season, every change of weather, indeed every hour of the day, produces some change in the magical hues and shapes of these mountains; and they are regarded by all the good wives, far and near, as perfect barometers. When the weather is fair and settled, they are clothed in blue and purple, and print their bold outlines on the clear evening sky; but sometimes, when the rest of the landscape is cloudless, they will gather a hood of gray vapors about their summits, which, in the last rays of the setting sun, will glow and light up like a crown of glory. — WASHINGTON IRVING: *Rip Van Winkle* in *The Sketch Book.*

8. The sequestered situation of this church seems always to have made it a favorite haunt of troubled spirits. It stands on a knoll, surrounded by locust trees and lofty elms, from among which its decent, whitewashed walls shine modestly forth, like Christian purity beaming through the shades of retirement. A gentle slope descends from it to a silver sheet of water, bordered by high trees, between which peeps may be caught at the blue hills of the Hudson. To look upon its grass-grown yard, where the sunbeams seem to sleep so quietly, one would think that there, at least, the dead might rest in peace. On one side of the church extends a wide, woody dell, along which raves a large brook among broken rocks and trunks of fallen trees. Over a deep black part of the stream, not far from the church, was formerly thrown a wooden bridge. The road that led to it, and the bridge itself, were thickly shaded by overhanging trees, which cast a gloom about it, even in the daytime, but occasioned a fearful darkness at night. Such was one of the favorite haunts of the headless horseman, and the place where he was most frequently encountered. The tale was told of old Brouwer, a most heretical disbeliever in ghosts, — how he met the horseman returning from his foray into Sleepy Hollow, and was obliged to get up behind him; how they galloped over bush and brake, over hill and swamp, until they reached the bridge, when the horseman suddenly turned into a skeleton, threw old Brouwer into the brook, and sprang away over the tree tops with a clap of thunder. — WASHINGTON IRVING: *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* in *The Sketch Book*.

9. Perhaps it might be owing to the pleasing serenity that reigned in my own mind, that I fancied I saw cheerfulness in every countenance throughout the journey. A stagecoach, however, carries animation always with it, and puts the world in motion as it whirls along. The horn, sounded at the entrance of a village, produces a general bustle. Some hasten forth to meet friends; some, with bundles and bandboxes, to secure places, and, in the hurry of the moment, can hardly take leave of the group that accompanies them. In the meantime the coachman has a world of small commissions to execute: sometimes he delivers a hare or pheasant; sometimes jerks a small parcel or newspaper to the door of a public house; and sometimes with knowing leer and words of sly import, hands to some half-blush-

ing, half-laughing housemaid an odd-shaped billet-doux from some rustic admirer. As the coach rattles through the village, every one runs to the window, and you have glances on every side of fresh country faces and blooming giggling girls. At the corners are assembled juntos of village idlers and wise men, who take their stations there for the important purpose of seeing company pass; but the sagest knot is generally at the blacksmith's, to whom the passing of the coach is an event fruitful of much speculation. The smith, with the horse's heel in his lap, pauses as the vehicle whirls by; the cyclops round the anvil suspend their ringing hammers, and suffer the iron to grow cool; and the sooty specter, in brown paper cap, laboring at the bellows, leans on the handle for a moment, and permits the asthmatic engine to heave a long-drawn sigh, while he glares through the murky smoke and sulphureous gleams of the smithy. — WASHINGTON IRVING: *The Stage Coach* in *The Sketch Book.*

10. The mirth of the company was greatly promoted by the humors of an eccentric personage whom Mr. Bracebridge always addressed with the quaint appellation of Master Simon. He was a tight, brisk little man, with the air of an arrant old bachelor. His nose was shaped like the bill of a parrot; his face, slightly pitted with the smallpox, with a dry, perpetual bloom on it, like a frost-bitten leaf in autumn. He had an eye of great quickness and vivacity, with a drollery and lurking waggery of expression that was irresistible. He was evidently the wit of the family, dealing very much in sly jokes and innuendoes with the ladies, and making infinite merriment by harpings upon old themes; which, unfortunately, my ignorance of the family chronicles did not permit me to enjoy. It seemed to be his great delight during supper to keep a young girl next him in a continual agony of stifled laughter, in spite of her awe or the reproving looks of her mother, who sat opposite. Indeed, he was the idol of the younger part of the company, who laughed at everything he said or did, and at every turn of his countenance. I could not wonder at it, for he must have been a miracle of accomplishments in their eyes. He could imitate Punch and Judy; make an old woman of his hand, with the assistance of a burnt cork and pocket handkerchief; and cut an orange into such a ludicrous caricature that the young folks were ready to die with laughing. — WASHINGTON IRVING: *Christmas Eve* in *The Sketch Book.*

11. When he entered the house, the conquest of his heart was complete. It was one of those spacious farmhouses, with high-ridged but lowly sloping roofs, built in the style handed down from the first Dutch settlers; the low, projecting eaves forming a piazza along the front, capable of being closed up in bad weather. Under this were hung flails, harness, various utensils of husbandry, and nets for fishing in the neighboring river. Benches were built along the sides for summer use; and a great spinning-wheel at one end, and a churn at the other, showed the various uses to which this important porch might be devoted. From this piazza the wonderful Ichabod entered the hall, which formed the center of the mansion, and the place of usual residence. Here rows of resplendent pewter, ranged on a long dresser, dazzled his eyes. In one corner stood a huge bag of wool ready to be spun; in another, a quantity of linsey-woolsey just from the loom. Ears of Indian corn, and strings of dried apples and peaches, hung in gay festoons along the walls, mingled with the gaud of red peppers: and a door left ajar gave him a peep into the best parlor, where the claw-footed chairs and dark mahogany tables shone like mirrors; and irons, with their accompanying shovel and tongs, glistened from their covert of asparagus tops; mock oranges and conch shells decorated the mantelpiece; strings of various colored bird's eggs were suspended above it; a great ostrich egg was hung from the center of the room; and a corner cupboard, knowingly left open, displayed immense treasures of old silver and well-mended china. — WASHINGTON IRVING: *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* in *The Sketch Book.*

12. In the course of a December tour in Yorkshire, I rode for a long distance in one of the public coaches on the day preceding Christmas. The coach was crowded, both inside and out, with passengers, who, by their talk, seemed principally bound to the mansions of relations or friends, to eat the Christmas dinner. It was loaded also with hampers of game, and baskets and boxes of delicacies; and hares hung dangling their long ears about the coachman's box, presents from distant friends for the impending feast. I had three fine rosy-cheeked schoolboys for my fellow-passengers inside, full of the buxom health and manly spirit which I have observed in the children of this country. They were returning home for the holidays in high glee, and promising themselves a world of enjoyment. It was delightful to hear the gigan-

tic plans of pleasure of the little rogues, and the impracticable feats they were to perform during their six weeks' emancipation from the abhorred thraldom of book, birch, and pedagogue. They were full of the anticipations of the meeting with the family and household, down to the very cat and dog, and of the joy they were to give their little sisters by the presents with which their pockets were crammed; but the meeting to which they seemed to look forward with the greatest impatience was with Bantam, which I found to be a pony, and, according to their talk, possessed of more virtues than any steed since the days of Bucephalus. How he could trot! How he could run! And then such leaps as he would take! There was not a hedge in the whole country that he could not clear. —WASHINGTON IRVING: *The Stage Coach* in *The Sketch Book.*

13. I paused to contemplate a tomb on which lay the effigy of a knight in complete armor. A large buckler was on one arm; the hands were pressed together in supplication upon the breast; the face was almost covered by the morion; the legs were crossed, in token of the warrior's having been engaged in the holy war. It was the tomb of a crusader, — of one of those military enthusiasts who so strangely mingled religion and romance, and whose exploits form the connecting link between fact and fiction, between the history and the fairy tale. There is something extremely picturesque in the tombs of these adventurers, decorated as they are with rude armorial bearings and Gothic sculpture. They comport with the antiquated chapels in which they are generally found; and in considering them, the imagination is apt to kindle with the legendary associations, the romantic fictions, the chivalrous pomp and pageantry, which poetry has spread over the wars for the sepulcher of Christ. They are the relics of times utterly gone by, of beings passed from recollection, of customs and manners with which ours have no affinity. They are like objects from some strange and distant land, of which we have no certain knowledge, and about which all our conceptions are vague and visionary. There is something extremely solemn and awful in those effigies on Gothic tombs, extended as if in the sleep of death, or in the supplication of the dying hour. They have an effect infinitely more impressive on my feelings than the fanciful attitudes, the overwrought conceits, and allegorical groups, which abound on modern monuments.

I have been struck, also, with the superiority of many of the old sepulchral inscriptions. There was a noble way, in former times, of saying things simply, and yet saying them proudly; and I do not know an epitaph that breathes a loftier consciousness of family worth and honorable lineage than one which affirms, of a noble house, that "all the brothers were brave, and all the sisters virtuous." — WASHINGTON IRVING: *Westminster Abbey* in *The Sketch Book.*

14. There is something in the very season of the year that gives a charm to the festivity of Christmas. At other times we derive a great portion of our pleasures from the mere beauties of nature. Our feelings sally forth and dissipate themselves over the sunny landscape, and we "live abroad and everywhere." The song of the bird; the murmur of the stream; the breathing fragrance of spring; the soft voluptuousness of summer; the golden pomp of autumn; earth, with its mantle of refreshing green; and heaven, with its deep, delicious blue and its cloudy magnificence, — all fill us with mute but exquisite delight, and we revel in the luxury of mere sensation. But in the depth of winter, when Nature lies despoiled of every charm, and wrapped in her shroud of sheeted snow, we turn for our gratifications to moral sources. The dreariness and desolation of the landscape, the short gloomy days and darksome nights, while they circumscribe our wanderings, shut in our feelings also from rambling abroad, and make us more keenly disposed for the pleasures of the social circle. Our thoughts are more concentrated, our friendly sympathies more aroused. We feel more sensibly the charm of each other's society, and are brought more closely together by dependence on each other for enjoyment. Heart calleth unto heart; and we draw our pleasures from the deep wells of living kindness, which lie in the quiet recesses of our bosoms, and which, when resorted to, furnish forth the pure element of domestic felicity. — WASHINGTON IRVING: *Christmas* in *The Sketch Book.*

15. In the evening we reached a village where I had determined to pass the night. As we drove into the great gateway of the inn, I saw on one side the light of a rousing kitchen fire beaming through a window. I entered, and admired, for the hundredth time, that picture of convenience, neatness, and broad, honest enjoyment, the kitchen of an English inn. It was of spacious dimensions, hung round

with copper and tin vessels highly polished, and decorated here and there with a Christmas green. Hams, tongues, and flitches of bacon were suspended from the ceiling; a smoke-jack made its ceaseless clanking beside the fireplace; and a clock ticked in one corner. A well-scoured deal table extended along one side of the kitchen, with a cold round of beef and other hearty viands upon it, over which two foaming tankards of ale seemed mounting guard. Travelers of inferior order were preparing to attack this stout repast, while others sat smoking and gossiping over their ale on two high-backed oaken settles beside the fire. Trim housemaids were hurrying backwards and forwards under the directions of a fresh bustling landlady, but still seizing an occasional moment to exchange a flippant word, and have a rallying laugh, with the group round the fire. The scene completely realized Poor Robin's humble idea of the comforts of midwinter: —

"Now trees their leafy hats do bare
To reverence Winter's silver hair,
A handsome hostess, merry host,
A pot of ale, and now a toast,
Tobacco and a good coal fire,
Are things this season doth require."

— WASHINGTON IRVING: *The Stage Coach* in *The Sketch Book.*

12. Narrations of One Paragraph. — *Foreword.* — A simple anecdote or incident condensed into one paragraph in length should be subject to the same formal criticism. Narratives of longer length will be discussed in a later chapter.

The following paragraphs of narrative material are selected from *Silas Marner* for the most part, as this book is not only excellently written, but it is also available to every student. A few paragraphs are taken from the narrative portions of Franklin's *Autobiography.*

The teacher will find ample material in narrations found in the College Requirements and elsewhere.

Exercise

Carry out Processes 1 and 2 as applied above to the Expository and Descriptive Paragraphs.

Illustrative Paragraph 1

Subject Sentence. — "*And yet he was not utterly forsaken in this trouble.*"

Given. — Silas Marner, his trouble.

To prove. — He was not utterly forsaken.

Proof. — He was not utterly forsaken.

1. The former repulsion which Marner had created in neighbors was partly dissipated now.
2. People who had avoided him before, now felt that Silas, in losing his treasure, did not have all the cunning attributed to him.
3. Hence, people who had before entirely avoided him because of what they believed to be his ill will now changed their feelings and considered him merely crazy.

Summary. — So in his trouble, the people now believing Silas to be crazy rather than a "poor mushed creatur" did not forsake him entirely.

Illustrative Paragraph 2

Subject Sentence. — "*He had plenty to do through the next hour.*"

Given. — Silas Marner, the next hour.

To prove. — He had plenty to do.

Proof. — Plenty to do.

The Proof will consist of details to illustrate and prove the word *plenty*.

These details should, of course, be expressed in complete sentence, with emphasis upon the word *plenty*.

Summary. —

Complete the work indicated.

Illustrative Paragraph 3

Subject Sentence. — *"We landed in Philadelphia on the 11th of October, where I found sundry alterations."*

Given. — Benjamin Franklin landing in Philadelphia, October 11.

To prove. — He found sundry alterations.

Proof. — Sundry alterations.

Summary.

Complete the work indicated.

1. We landed in Philadelphia on the 11th of October, where I found sundry alterations. Keith was no longer governor, being superseded by Major Gordon. I met him walking the streets as a common citizen. He seemed a little ashamed at seeing me, but passed without saying anything. I should have been as much ashamed at seeing Miss Read, had not her friends, despairing with reason of my return after the receipt of my letter, persuaded her to marry another, one Rogers, a potter, which was done in my absence. With him, however, she was never happy, and soon parted from him, refusing to cohabit with him or bear his name, it being now said that he had another wife. He was a worthless fellow, though an excellent workman, which was the temptation to her friends. He got into debt, ran away in 1727 or 1728, went to the West Indies, and died there. Keimer had got a better house, a shop well supplied with stationery, plenty of new types, a number of hands, though none good, and seemed to have a great deal of business. — Benjamin Franklin: *Autobiography*.

2. When we drew near the island, we found it was at a place where there could be no landing, there being a great surf on the stony beach. So we dropped anchor, and swung round towards the shore. Some people came down to the water edge and hallooed to us, as we did to

them; but the wind was so high, and the surf so loud, that we could not hear so as to understand each other. There were canoes on the shore, and we made signs, and hallooed that they should fetch us; but they either did not understand us, or thought it impracticable, so they went away, and night coming on, we had no remedy but to wait till the wind should abate; and, in the meantime, the boatman and I concluded to sleep, if we could; and so crowded into the scuttle, with the Dutchman, who was still wet, and the spray beating over the head of our boat, leaked through to us, so that we were soon almost as wet as he. In this manner we lay all night, with very little rest; but, the wind abating the next day, we made a shift to reach Amboy before night, having been thirty hours on the water, without victuals, or any drink but a bottle of filthy rum, and the water we sailed on being salt. — BENJAMIN FRANKLIN: *Autobiography.*

3. He turned immediately towards the hearth, where Silas Marner sat lulling the child. She was perfectly quiet now, but not asleep; only soothed by sweet porridge and warmth into that wide-gazing calm which makes us older human beings, with our inward turmoil, feel a certain awe in the presence of a little child, such as we feel before some quiet majesty or beauty in the earth or sky, — before a steady glowing planet, or a full-flowered eglantine, or the bending trees over a silent pathway. The wide-open blue eyes looked up at Godfrey's without any uneasiness or sign of recognition. The child could make no visible, audible claim on its father; and the father felt a strange mixture of feelings, a conflict of regret and joy, that the pulse of that little heart had no response for the half-jealous yearning in his own, when the blue eyes turned away from him slowly, and fixed themselves on the weaver's queer face, which was bent low down to look at them, while the small hand began to pull Marner's withered cheek with loving disfiguration. — GEORGE ELIOT: *Silas Marner.*

4. This change to a kindlier feeling was shown in various ways: The odor of Christmas cooking being on the wind, it was the season when superfluous pork and black puddings are suggestive of charity in well-to-do families; and Silas's misfortune had brought him uppermost in the memory of housekeepers like Mrs. Osgood. Mr. Crackenthorp, too, while he admonished Silas that his money had probably been taken from him because he thought too much of it, and never

came to church, enforced the doctrine by a present of pigs' pettitoes, well calculated to dissipate unfounded prejudices against the clerical character. Neighbors who had nothing but verbal consolation to give, showed a disposition not only to greet Silas, and discuss his misfortune at some length when they encountered him in the village, but also to take the trouble of calling at his cottage, and getting him to repeat all the details on the very spot; and then they would try to cheer him by saying, " Well, Master Marner, you're no worse off nor other poor folks, after all; and if you was to be crippled, the parish 'ud give you a 'lowance." — GEORGE ELIOT: *Silas Marner.*

5. The reason why Godfrey and Nancy had left the dance was not so tender as Ben imagined. In the close press of couples a slight accident had happened to Nancy's dress, which, while it was short enough to show her neat ankle in front, was long enough behind to be caught under the stately stamp of the Squire's foot, so as to rend certain stitches at the waist, and cause much sisterly agitation in Priscilla's mind, as well as serious concern in Nancy's. One's thoughts may be much occupied with love struggles, but hardly so as to be insensible to a disorder in the general framework of things. Nancy had no sooner completed her duty in the figure they were dancing, than she said to Godfrey, with a deep blush, that she must go and sit down till Priscilla could come to her; for the sisters had already exchanged a short whisper and an open-eyed glance full of meaning. No reason less urgent than this could have prevailed on Nancy to give Godfrey this opportunity of sitting apart with her. As for Godfrey, he was feeling so happy and oblivious under the long charm of the country dance with Nancy, that he got rather bold on the strength of her confusion, and was capable of leading her straight away, without leave asked, into the adjoining small parlor, where the card tables were set. — GEORGE ELIOT: *Silas Marner.*

6. He half expected that this would be shock enough, and that Eppie would begin to cry. But instead of that, she began to shake herself on his knee, as if the proposition opened a pleasing novelty. Seeing that he must proceed to extremities, he put her into the coal hole, and held the door closed, with a trembling sense that he was using a strong measure. For a moment there was silence, but then came a little cry, " Opy, opy!" and Silas let her out again, saying, "Now

Eppie 'ull never be naughty again, else she must go in the coal hole — a black, naughty place." — GEORGE ELIOT: *Silas Marner.*

7. But where was Silas Marner while this strange visitor had come to his hearth? He was in the cottage, but he did not see the child. During the last few weeks, since he had lost his money, he had contracted the habit of opening his door and looking out from time to time, as if he thought that his money might be somehow coming back to him, or that some trace, some news of it, might be mysteriously on the road, and be caught by the listening ear or the straining eye. It was chiefly at night, when he was not occupied in his loom, that he fell into this repetition of an act for which he could have assigned no definite purpose, and which can hardly be understood except by those who have undergone a bewildering separation from a supremely loved object. In the evening twilight, and later whenever the night was not dark, Silas looked out on that narrow prospect round the Stone Pits, listening and gazing, not with hope, but with mere yearning and unrest. — GEORGE ELIOT: *Silas Marner.*

8. And yet he was not utterly forsaken in his trouble. The repulsion Marner had always created in his neighbors was partly dissipated by the new light in which this misfortune had shown him. Instead of a man who had more cunning than honest folks could come by, and what was worse, had not the inclination to use that cunning in a neighborly way, it was now apparent that Silas had not cunning enough to keep his own. He was generally spoken of as a "poor mushed creatur"; and that avoidance of his neighbors, which had before been referred to his ill will, and to a probable addiction to worse company, was now considered mere craziness. — GEORGE ELIOT: *Silas Marner.*

9. He had plenty to do through the next hour. The porridge, sweetened with some dry brown sugar from an old store which he had refrained from using for himself, stopped the cries of the little one, and made her lift her blue eyes with a wide, quiet gaze at Silas, as he put the spoon into her mouth. Presently she slipped from his knee and began to toddle about, but with a pretty stagger that made Silas jump up and follow her lest she should fall against anything that would hurt her. But she only fell in a sitting posture on the ground, and began

to pull at her boots, looking up at him with a crying face as if the boots hurt her. He took her on his knee again, but it was some time before it occurred to Silas's dull bachelor mind that the wet boots were the grievance, pressing on her warm ankles. He got them off with difficulty, and baby was at once happily occupied with the primary mystery of her own toes, inviting Silas, with much chuckling, to consider the mystery too. But the wet boots had at last suggested to Silas that the child had been walking on the snow, and this roused him from his entire oblivion of any ordinary means by which it could have entered or been brought into his house. Under the prompting of this new idea, and without waiting to form conjectures, he raised the child in his arms, and went to the door. As soon as he had opened it, there was the cry of "mammy" again, which Silas had not heard since the child's first hungry waking. Bending forward, he could just discern the marks made by the little feet on the virgin snow, and he followed their track to the furze bushes. "Mammy!" the little one cried again and again, stretching itself forward so as almost to escape from Silas's arms, before he himself was aware that there was something more than the bush before him, — that there was a human body, with the head sunk low in the furze, and half covered with the shaken snow. — GEORGE ELIOT: *Silas Marner.*

13. **Argumentative Paragraphs.** — In this form of Paragraph Writing, it is noticed that the author states definitely in the Subject Sentence, just what he is going to prove. He uses this statement as the foundation upon which he builds his Paragraph.

Carry out Processes 1 and 2 in regard to this work in the Paragraphs.

ILLUSTRATIVE PARAGRAPHS

Subject Sentence. — *"First, sir, permit me to observe that the use of force alone is but temporary."*

Given. — Force, as a means of dealing with the colonies.

To prove. — The use of force is but temporary.

Proof. — Reasons. 1.
2.
3. etc.

Summary.

Subject Sentence. — "*My next objection is its uncertainty.*"
Given. — Force, as a means of dealing with the colonies.
To prove. — The use of force is uncertain in its effect.
Proof.— Reasons.
Summary.

Complete the above and continue in the same manner through the following Paragraphs.

1. First, Sir, permit me to observe that the use of force alone is but *temporary*. It may subdue for a moment, but it does not remove the necessity of subduing again; and a nation is not governed which is perpetually to be conquered.

2. My next objection is its *uncertainty*. Terror is not always the effect of force, and an armament is not a victory. If you do not succeed, you are without resource: for conciliation failing, force remains; but force failing, no further hope of reconciliation is left. Power and authority are sometimes bought by kindness, but they can never be begged as arms by an impoverished and defeated violence.

3. A further objection to force is that you *impair the object* by your very endeavors to preserve it. The thing you fought for is not the thing which you recover, but depreciated, sunk, wasted, and consumed in the contest. Nothing less will content me than *whole America*. I do not choose to consume its strength along with our own; because in all parts it is the British strength that I consume. I do not choose to be caught by a foreign enemy at the end of this exhausting conflict, and still less in the midst of it. I may escape, but I can make no insurance against such an event. Let me add that I do not choose wholly to break the American spirit; because it is the spirit that has made the country.

4. Lastly, we have no sort of *experience* in favor of force as an instrument in the rule of our colonies. Their growth and their utility have been owing to methods altogether different. Our ancient indulgence has been said to be pursued to a fault. It may be so; but we know, if feeling is evidence, that our fault was more tolerable than our attempt to mend it, and our sin far more salutary than our penitence. — BURKE: *Speech on Conciliation with America.*

5. The capital leading questions on which you must this day decide are these two: first, whether you ought to concede; and secondly, what your concession ought to be. On the first of these questions we have gained (as I have just taken the liberty of observing to you) some ground. But I am sensible that a good deal more is still to be done. Indeed, Sir, to enable us to determine both on the one and the other of these great questions with a firm and precise judgment, I think it may be necessary to consider distinctly the true nature and the peculiar circumstances of the object which we have before us: because after all our struggle, whether we will or not, we must govern America according to that nature and to those circumstances, and not according to our own imaginations, not according to abstract ideas of right; by no means according to mere general theories of government, the resort to which appears to me in our present situation no better than arrant trifling. I shall therefore endeavour, with your leave, to lay before you some of the most material of these circumstances in as full and as clear a manner as I am able to state them. — BURKE: *Speech on Conciliation with America.*

6. My resolutions, therefore, mean to establish the equity and justice of a taxation of America by *grant*, and not by *imposition;* to mark the *legal competency* of the colony assemblies for the support of their government in peace and for public aids in time of war; to acknowledge that this legal competency has had *a dutiful and beneficial exercise*, and that experience has shown the *benefit of their grants* and the *futility of parliamentary taxation as a method of supply.* — BURKE: *Speech on Conciliation with America.*

7. To impoverish the colonies in general, and in particular to arrest the noble course of their marine enterprises, would be a more easy task. I freely confess it. We have shown a disposition to a system

of this kind, — a disposition even to continue the restraint after the offence, looking on ourselves as rivals to our colonies, and persuaded that of course we must gain all that they shall lose. Much mischief we may certainly do. The power inadequate to all other things is often more than sufficient for this. I do not look on the direct and immediate power of the colonies to resist our violence as very formidable. In this, however, I may be mistaken. But when I consider that we have colonies for no purpose but to be serviceable to us, it seems to my poor understanding a little preposterous to make them unserviceable in order to keep them obedient. It is, in truth, nothing more than the old and, as I thought, exploded problem of tyranny, which proposes to beggar its subjects into submission. But remember, when you have completed your system of impoverishment, that Nature still proceeds in her ordinary course; that discontent will increase with misery; and that there are critical moments in the fortune of all states, when they who are too weak to contribute to your prosperity may be strong enough to complete your ruin. *Spoliatis arma supersunt.* — BURKE: *Speech on Conciliation with America.*

14. **Exercise which can be called a Corollary to the Imitation Period.** — The following suggestion in regard to an exercise in this period may serve as a corollary. In this work, we have *given* a confused arrangement of the sentences of a model Paragraph. The work lies in the effort to reduce to order this entirely chaotic arrangement. The method is as follows: (1) Select the Subject Sentence; (2) write this Subject Sentence as the first sentence; (3)build up from this sentence, selecting those sentences of the author which form natural links in the chain.

15. **The Range of the Work.** — This work should be given very frequently as practice work in Paragraph building. It will test the pupil's own grasp of the mathematical structure of a Paragraph, and it will convince him that such a structure is considered essential by the great writers of

English prose. Let the teacher vary this work as may seem best, covering the four forms of discourse.

16. **Summary.** — From this chapter on the Imitation Period, we can draw the following conclusions: —

1. By the term *Imitation Period*, we mean the stage in an art in which the emphasis is laid upon the mechanical structure, the stage in which the artist or sculptor imitates rather than creates.
2. In the Art of English Composition, this Period is necessary and demands that we aim to discover the secret of a clear, simple, and forceful style.
3. To discover such a secret, we must study models whose style is characterized by clearness, simplicity, and force, and therefore worth imitating.
4. The method of approach used in this Period embraces the following six steps: (1) Study facts of the model Paragraph; (2) select author's own Subject Sentence; (3) write author's own Subject Sentence as the first sentence of your own Paragraph; (4) prove this Subject Sentence (without text); (5) write Paragraph from material under (4); (6) compare your Paragraph with the original.
5. Analysis of certain models of clear, simple, and forceful expression reveals the fact that the underlying structure is stiff, rigid, and mathematical, and that the secret of the style lies in the Paragraph structure erected upon a solid foundation, the Subject Sentence.
6. This solid foundation, the Subject Sentence, must be repeated or explained, that its meaning may be entirely clear to you and to the reader, and that the approach to the Proof may be made as gradual as possible.

7. Remember also, that the sentences following the Subject Sentence and the Subject Sentence repeated serve as links in a chain, and that each must hook into the preceding. Look out for the small connecting words such as *indeed, but, therefore, even, on the other hand, truly*, etc.; these are excellent links.
8. Remember that from a structural point of view, a Paragraph is right or wrong; in other words, its correctness depends on the fact whether or not you have *proved* the Subject Sentence. Hence aim at structural perfection to be brought about by a close following of the steps of the Imitation Period.
9. The work, then, consists of a double process: (1) resolving the model Paragraph into elements; (2) building up your own Paragraph from the Subject Sentence and Material given in the model.
10. This double process should be applied to Paragraphs of the Expository type (§ 10), the Descriptive type (§ 11), the Narrative type (§ 12), the Argumentative type (§ 13).

CHAPTER III

THE PERIOD OF SUGGESTION

1. **This Period, the Most Natural Step after the Imitation Period.** — The mechanic gradually leaves his model, and becomes conscious that there is some bit of originality in him that demands recognition. But the process is slow, and the mechanic is not yet ready to be termed "artist." He must pass first through a kind of transitory stage, in which he still lays emphasis upon the structure which serves as the firm foundation, but at the same time he is seeking out his material from other sources.

2. **The Period of Suggestion in the Art of English Composition.** — By this period, we mean that the form is still rigid, that the building foundation is likewise rigid, but that the material out of which the structure is to be erected is now left somewhat in your own hands. You will have the *Subject Sentence*, the stable cause of why the Paragraph should be written; you will have the geometrical formula, which will serve as an adjustment for your thoughts; you will have also *help as to the building material.* It is for you to aim above all to *prove your Subject Sentence.* To do this you must write it as the *first sentence, keep your eye upon it,* and *prove it as you would a Proposition in Geometry.* The building material you may gather from the following sources: (1) the text at large; (2) classroom discussions and teachers' suggestions; (3) whatever sources you wish, using any material which will help you *to prove your Subject Sentence.*

3. **Explanation of the First Step of the Suggestion Period.** — By the first step is meant the period in which the Subject Sentence is in your hands, and the material is derived from the text at large. In our Imitation stage, our plan was to keep as close to the text as possible; our Subject Sentence and all our building material were found in *one* Paragraph. Now, however, our Subject Sentence itself has expanded somewhat; it is more general in nature, and therefore embraces the important facts of more than one Paragraph. The building material likewise is not limited to one Paragraph, but is found within several Paragraphs, or perhaps covering the entire text, being as general in its character as is the nature of the Subject Sentence.

This step in which the Subject Sentence is given you and the material is derived from the text at large is especially valuable for review work. The Subject Sentence should be more general in character and should be such as demands (for its Proof) a general knowledge of the text. A series of such Paragraphs based upon the work of the College Requirements should furnish all the review necessary. The work given below is but a suggested method of procedure; the range of work here and its nature should depend upon the texts studied, and left, therefore, to the teacher's discretion.

Let us suppose, for example, we are studying *Macbeth*, and in our work, we are to write *A Character Study of Macbeth*. The Subject Sentence of our first Paragraph may be, — *Our first estimate of Macbeth is that of a brave, patriotic man.* Consider the Subject Sentence and notice that its nature is such as demands a more general study of the text than was demanded in the Imitation Period. The Proof of such a Subject Sentence requires a careful review of the character of

the man as we have watched it develop. This proving material may be gathered: (1) *from the text;* (2) *from class discussion.*

The following may serve as an illustration: —

Illustrative Paragraph from *Macbeth*

Subject Sentence. — *Our first estimate of Macbeth is that he is a brave, patriotic man.*

Material. — Suggested from (1) text, (2) from class discussion.

Given. — Macbeth, at the opening of the play.

To prove. — He was a brave, and patriotic man.

Proof. — Macbeth, *brave and patriotic at opening* of the play.

1. In the battle of Forres, when his countrymen were retreating, Macbeth cut out his way to the front of the fray and killed the leader of the opponents.
2. When fresh troops joined the enemy, Macbeth, still undaunted, spurred on into the thick of the battle.
3. Never thinking of his own safety, only thinking of his king and Scotland, Macbeth struck blows on blows.
4. At last, aided by Banquo, Macbeth drove the enemy from the field.

Summary. — Such is the first picture we have of Macbeth, a brave and patriotic man, loyal to his country and to his king.

The Paragraph Written. — (Taken from classroom work.)

Our first estimate of Macbeth is that he is a brave, patriotic man. At once we perceive that he is fearless for himself and always loyal to his king. In the battle at Forres when

his countrymen, worn out by the long struggle, were retreating before the enemy, Macbeth, never fearful, literally cut out a way to the front of the fray and killed the leader of his opponents. Then, when fresh troops joined the enemy, Macbeth, still undaunted, once more spurred his charger to the thick of the battle. Never thinking of his own safety, only thinking that his monarch's troops were in danger, while working with the fury of several men, Macbeth struck blows now on this side and now on that. At last, aided by Banquo, Macbeth completely routed this last reënforcement, and drove them fleeing from the field. This is the first picture we have of a hero, loyal and true, who would brave any danger to save the honor of his king and of Scotland.

Illustrative Paragraph 2

Let us take another example: —

Suppose we have completed our work in Franklin's *Autobiography*. Again we desire this review in a permanent form of Paragraphs. We may say —

The Autobiography tells the story of the rise of a great man from obscurity to splendor. The Proof of this statement demands a general knowledge of the facts of this man's life, and therefore may be derived from the text at large and from any facts that have been discussed in class.

The work will proceed as follows: —

Illustrative Paragraph developed in this Period of Suggestion

Given, Subject Sentence. *Material*, suggested from the text.

For example, we have been studying Franklin's *Autobiography*. We have read the entire work; we have become

familiar with the important facts relative to the life of Franklin. We wish now to write one complete, perfect Paragraph which will summarize the life of this man. Then suppose we take, —

Subject Sentence. — *" The Autobiography tells the story of the rise of a great man from obscurity to splendor."*

Given. — The Autobiography.

To prove. — The Autobiography tells the story of the rise of a great man from obscurity to splendor.

Proof. — State reasons in sentences which bear upon,

1. His early life.
2. His first progress and reputation.
3. His world-wide recognition and universal fame.

Summary.

Exercises

Foreword.

The Subject Sentences given are based upon the College Requirement work and may serve as suggestions. Let the teacher judge their nature and then give other Subject Sentences on the work being studied. The following is a series used in class to develop *A Character Study of Macbeth.* Subject Sentences: —

Par. 1. First, we know Macbeth as a brave, noble warrior and a tender-hearted, courteous gentleman. (Notice the qualities to be proved: brave, noble warrior; tender-hearted, courteous gentleman.)

Par. 2. Linked to these qualities we see those of ambition and superstition. (Prove ambition, superstition.)

Par. 3. Having once yielded to temptation, Macbeth becomes a moral degenerate.

Par. 4. It is natural, however, that such degeneration should be accompanied by intense mental suffering.

Par. 5. At the end, we see those qualities which enable Macbeth to hold the position of the Hero of the Tragedy.

Subject Sentences from Franklin: —

Par. 1. From the first pages of the Autobiography, we learn of the early struggles of Franklin.

Par. 2. Franklin began his career as a printer, in which trade he continued until the public demanded his help.

Par. 3. Instead of the leisure which Franklin expected to enjoy, he found his time consumed with affairs of the government.

Par. 4. At his death, Franklin was honored by all nations, etc.

Remember: —

1. Aim to prove the qualifying words in the statement.
2. Work out the Proof according to the formula, *first.*
3. Incorporate work into a Perfect Paragraph.
4. Remember: —
   (*a*) First sentence — Subject Sentence.
   (*b*) Second sentence — Subject Sentence repeated or explained.
   (*c*) Succeeding sentences — Proof.
   (*d*) Last sentence — Summary.
5. Remember links between sentences. Think of the Paragraph as a chain of firmly connecting links.

4. **Suggestion Period, Second Step.** — Such a step as the preceding leads up naturally to the step in which the

Subject Sentence is still given, but the *material is derived from two sources:* (1) *from the teacher's lectures;* (2) *from classroom discussion.*

In (1) the work should be prepared by the teacher and taken down in the form of notes by the pupils; in other words, the teacher should lecture in Paragraphs. These Paragraphs should be conclusive proofs of Subject Sentences. These Subject Sentences should be written on the board; thus the pupils will be able to keep their eyes upon the Subject Sentence and pay attention to the Proof as it proceeds. The Paragraph should be written for the next lesson, or in class.

The work in this step should consist of whatever the teacher deems necessary. It may seem wise to talk about subjects which are more or less allied to the work being studied. For example, suppose the work is in *The Merchant of Venice*. It is very probable that the teacher may wish to tell something of the plot of the play. She may then write upon the board some such Subject Sentence as, *The plot of the Merchant of Venice is composed of two distinct stories*. Or she may wish to speak about Shakespeare; then perhaps she will frame her Subject Sentence thus: *We know but few facts in regard to Shakespeare's life*, and her second Paragraph may be, *Though the facts are few, yet much knowledge of him has come to us through his works*. To take another example: In correlation with the work on Samuel Johnson, she may wish to speak of Boswell, in some such way as, — "*Of the qualities which ordinarily raise men to eminence as writers, Boswell had absolutely none.*"

Whatever may be the subject, the teacher should develop and *prove* a specific Subject Sentence written on the board; the pupil should follow the Proof and then write the Paragraph.

In (2) the work comes gradually to pass into the pupils' own hands; but all help possible should be derived from classroom discussions. The Subject Sentence is still *given; the building material worked out* in class and put into the formula; then the Paragraph should be written either in class or as home work. This work varies from that of (1) in that it embraces a wider range of subjects and material.

It is suggested that Paragraph building in this step be not limited definitely to any one form of discourse, but that the emphasis be laid upon the *structure* of the Paragraph rather than upon the *nature* of the Paragraph. Hence it is desirable to select Subject Sentences from Paragraphs of Description, Narration, Exposition, or Argumentation. Consider the following Subject Sentences: —

1. *Subject Sentence.* — "*The three indispensable elements of a good soldier are courage, obedience, and loyalty.*" In this case, we can consider the Subject Sentence as *given;* the material for the Paragraph building to be discussed in class. The work will be put into the Geometry formula on the board; the paragraph itself written individually in class or as prepared work. The work of proving the Subject Sentence referred to above may proceed as follows: —

(*a*) What have we *given?*

(*b*) What are we *to prove?*

(*c*) What are the important words in the *given material?*

(*d*) What are the three important words in the assertion *to be proved?*

Consider the Proof: —

(*a*) Express in sentences your reasons why courage is an indispensable element of a good soldier.

(*b*) Continue proving the words *obedience* and *loyalty,*

showing that they are also indispensable elements of a good soldier.

(*c*) Do not forget the summary sentence which is required to show that the Subject Sentence has been completely proved.

2. *Subject Sentence.* — "*The old farmhouse kitchen had a charm all its own.*"

(*a*) What have we *given?*

(*b*) What are we *to prove?*

(*c*) What are the important words in the *given material?*

(*d*) What is the important quality *to be proved?*

Consider the Proof: —

(*a*) Express in sentences those qualities or characteristics which would lend charm to an old farmhouse kitchen.

(*b*) Continue proving the Subject Sentence, laying emphasis upon those characteristics which are *peculiar* to the old *farmhouse;* in other words, you are to prove that the charm was *all its own.*

(*c*) A summary sentence is required to show that the Subject Sentence has been completely developed and proved.

3. *Subject Sentence.* — "*A standing army is unnecessary in the United States.*"

(*a*) What have we *given?*

(*b*) What are we going *to prove?*

(*c*) What are the important words in the *given material?*

(*d*) What is the important word in the assertion *to be proved?*

Consider the Proof: —

Proceed as above, keeping in mind the *given material,* and what you are to prove. Reasons

should be given by the various pupils, and thus gradually the Paragraph should be built upon the Subject Sentence.

4. *Subject Sentence.* — "*Last Saturday, my brother and I had an exciting chase after some deer.*"

(*a*) What have we *given?*

(*b*) What are we *to prove?*

(*c*) What are the important words in the *given material?*

(*d*) What is the assertion *to be proved?*

Consider the Proof: —

Proceed as before, laying emphasis upon the assertion that the chase after the deer was an *exciting one.*

5. **Suggestion Period, Third Step.** — This last step in this Period is but a natural development from the preceding. The help given you in class in proving the Subject Sentence should easily prepare you for this last step in which the Subject Sentence is still given, and the Proof lies in your own hands. The foundation is definite; your aim is to prove the statement.

The range of work in this step is limitless. Subject Sentences may be selected from any models of clear, simple, and forceful expression, found in contemporary writing as well as in the works of the masters of English Prose. These Subject Sentences may vary in character, embracing all four forms of discourse; they may be selected or they may be composed by the teacher. The important fact is that they must be *given.*

6. **Exercise on the Suggestion Period, Steps 2 and 3.** — These Subject Sentences have been grouped together. The teacher may select those for class discussion which seem to

need more explanation, and consider them as Step 2. The others may be reserved for individual proof and development, and group them under Step 3.

SUBJECT SENTENCES TO BE PROVED ACCORDING TO STEPS 1 OR 2 IN THE SUGGESTION PERIOD

1. Saturday was for me a busy day.
2. Saturday was for me an unusually busy day.
3. To the uninitiated, football seems easy.
4. The view from the top of . . . hill is sufficient reward for the climb.
5. The sunset last night was unusually beautiful.
6. One to-day is worth two to-morrows.
7. To the person who understands football, the difficulties of the game appear.
8. It requires some skill and a good deal of patience to write one perfect paragraph of English prose.
9. When we arrived at the manor, our friends were ready for the hunt.
10. The following is an incident of my childhood.
11. Yesterday was one of autumn's tawny days, with golden tints and shadows.
12. The sweet September day was drawing to a close.
13. I am preparing for . . . (some higher institution) for the following reasons.
14. Here we are at the den, the coziest room in the house.
15. As civilization advances, poetry almost necessarily declines.
16. Good English is exact English.
17. It would not be easy, then, to imagine two persons differing more widely in appearance and character than *A* and *B*.

18. The riders from Lexington and Concord took a long ride through Middlesex Fells and the surrounding country.

19. The sun's work for one more day was over.

20. Seize every opportunity for writing.

21. The town was admirably situated for residences, for commerce, and for warfare.

22. The three indispensable elements of a good soldier are courage, obedience, and loyalty.

23. A good partisan is not always a good citizen.

24. Yesterday was winter in her roughest mood.

25. Doctor Brown's character is like a combination lock.

26. The most interesting person in the class is . . . .

27. The old farmhouse kitchen had a charm all its own.

28. The traveler may find in the United States almost every kind of climate of the globe.

29. The early Pilgrim Fathers had many difficulties to overcome.

30. You can usually judge a person's character by what amuses him.

31. There are many things to be said in favor of the small college.

32. The sense of honor can be cultivated.

33. Fun and humor are by no means the same thing.

34. The study of history is like foreign travel.

35. What remarkably different men were Lincoln and Lee.

36. A standing army is unnecessary in the United States.

37. The poet is like a bee.

38. Geniuses are uncomfortable persons to live with.

39. A shoemaker, we are told, should stick to his last.

40. Good reading should be considered a duty.

41. The decline of serious and helpful reading is due to the increase of magazines and newspapers.

42. A republic is not the best form of government for every nation.

43. Nothing succeeds like success.

44. Every artist must first be a mechanic.

45. There are several types of pupils in our class.

46. The " good old times " were no better than our own.

47. The courses in the High School should be elective.

48. A New England village usually contains two or three characteristic figures.

49. Doctor Brown's snug little library presented a startling contrast to the bitter night without.

50. Women nowadays have the choice of many means of self-support.

7. **Summary.** — From this chapter on the Suggestion Period, we can draw the following conclusions: —

1. This Period of Suggestion is the most natural step following the Imitation Period in any art.
2. In the Art of English Composition, this period means that the foundation of the Paragraph is *given*, but that the building material is *suggested* rather than *given* directly.
3. This material is no longer limited to one Paragraph; it may be gathered from the text at large.
4. The second step is that in which the Subject Sentence is *given;* the materials derived from two sources: (1) the teacher's lectures; (2) classroom discussions.
5. The third step in the Suggestion Period is that in which the Subject Sentence is *given;* the material is original, derived from any source you wish; your aim is to prove the given Subject Sentence.

CHAPTER IV

THE PERIOD OF ORIGINALITY

1. **Meaning of the Term.** — By this so-called period of originality, we mean that stage in the Paragraph development in which the mechanic has given place to the artist. It is the period of personal and individual expression. Mechanical details exist still, but they are not the most staring objects in sight. Just why this is true is the reason why the five-finger exercise comes to play less and less the all-conspicuous part, and becomes inextricably interwoven with the harmony itself. That it is essential is true, but that its rôle is changed from the all-important to a subordinate part; that it has given place to original interpretation; these facts are also true. So it should be now with your writing. The structure still exists, but it should be covered by the work of the artist.

2. **The Range of the Work.** — By this time you should realize the necessity as well as the importance of understanding the mechanical structure of the Art of Composition. In every case this should be your first aim: look out for the foundation. A constant watch over this particular will stimulate you toward artistic work. Remember you can write *correctly* if you cannot write *artistically*. Also remember that the more thoroughly the form has been mastered, the more naturally you will come to your own in writing. This is bound to be true in any phase of this art. Once having proved the efficiency of this form, you are ready

to apply it to *Description*, *Narration*, *Exposition*, or *Argumentation*.

3. **The First Step in Original Paragraph Building.** — Up to this time you have realized the following important facts in regard to the Subject Sentence: —

1. The *necessity* of a Subject Sentence in *every* Paragraph.
2. The value and significance of its *first position* in the Paragraph.
3. The component parts of the Subject Sentence corresponding definitely to the *Given* and the *To Prove* elements of a Geometry proposition. From these facts you should realize therefore that, —
   (1) Your Subject Sentence is the essential foundation of the Paragraph and that you should attempt to write no Paragraph without one.
   (2) That you should spend considerable time and thought in thus composing your Subject Sentence.
   (3) That your Paragraph itself is but a complete proof of your Subject Sentence. Hence, in composing this essential foundation of your Paragraph, aim, above all, to make a statement in which there is something *to prove*.

For example, an incident told in a Paragraph began this way: *One day my brother and I went fishing*. Consider that the first sentence, and you will realize that there is nothing in that statement which is *definite*, and therefore nothing to tell, or, in the words of Geometry, nothing *to prove*. Suppose we change such a sentence into this: "*My brother and I had great luck that day we went fishing*, or *That day was a memorable one to us*." Even such simple statements immediately give you something definite to handle, something to

tell about, something *to prove*. Therefore, in composing the Subject Sentences of your Paragraphs, aim at a statement which has in itself something *to prove*.

Suppose your teacher asks you to write a one-page paragraph description of a *Winter's Day*, or *Your Walk to School this Morning*, or *The Sunset you saw Last Night*, or of the *View from your Window*. What is the first thing to do? Without a question, there is but one thing to do. Lay the foundation of your Paragraph, namely, *state in one sentence the fundamental quality or fact upon which you will build your Paragraph*. Such a statement may be as simple as, — *To-day has been an intensely cold day*, or, *On my walk to school this morning I met an interesting man*, or, *The sunset I saw last night was sufficient reward for the climb up the hill*.

You will find no difficulty if you keep in mind that your *first* sentence is the important sentence and that it must contain a statement which can be *expanded, developed*, and *proved*.

Exercise

Compose one Subject Sentence to be the foundation of *one* Paragraph.

1. How to Build a ——.
2. How to Sail a ——.
3. Some Suggestions to Golfers.
4. The Science of Baseball.
5. An Experiment in Chemistry.
6. A Piece of Laboratory Apparatus.
7. The Telephone (or some other modern invention).
8. The Making of a Newspaper.
9. The Management of an Athletic Association.
10. Running a School Paper.

11. How —— is Made.
12. Raising Pigeons.
13. High School Spirit.
14. Honor.
15. Success.
16. Fun and Humor.
17. Amusement and Happiness.
18. Differences between Preparatory School and College.
19. The Good and Bad of the Theater.
20. The Value of Vacation.
21. Why Baseball is so Popular.
22. Macaulay's Style.
23. The Character of Samuel Johnson.
24. What is Scholarship?
25. The Art of English Composition.
26. The House in which you Live.
27. The Most Picturesque House you Know.
28. The Church You Attend.
29. Your Own High School.
30. A Public Square.
31. A Camp in the Woods.
32. A New England Village.
33. A Country Store.
34. A Homelike Library.
35. An Old Farmhouse Kitchen.
36. A Sea-beach at Noon.
37. Moonlight at Sea.
38. The Woods in Winter; in the Fall; in Summer.
39. The Stadium during a Great Game.
40. Scene at a Railroad Station.
41. An extended view, such as from some tower, or from a mountain top.

42. Morning in the City or Country.
43. A Busy Market Place.
44. The parlor in an old-fashioned New England house in the country.
45. A Marine View from the Shore.
46. A Summer Hotel.
47. A Still Pool in the Woods.
48. A Walk to School in the Spring.
49. A Snowy Morning.
50. A Day in the Woods.
51. A Stroll in Town, or Country.
52. A Mountain Climb.
53. An Automobile Journey.
54. A Boat Race.
55. An Evening at the Theater.
56. An Adventure on the Plains.
57. A Story of the Supernatural.
58. A War Story.
59. Mrs. B——'s Ball.
60. My Visit to ——.
61. The most exciting incident in your experience.
62. An incident from animal life.
63. An experience in hunting, fishing, tramping, camping, or the like.
64. The visit of simple country people to a great city.
65. The adventures of some city people in the country.
66. An Adventure at Sea.
67. A story of school life.
68. A story of mistaken identity.
69. A local story I have heard.
70. Resolved: That a college education is good training for a business man.

71. Resolved: That one session is preferable to two in the preparatory school.

72. Resolved: That the United States should maintain a larger standing army.

73. Resolved: That the White Mountains should be made a national forest reservation.

4. **The Long Theme.** — What is a long theme or composition? If we turn back to Chapter I, we shall find that a long theme is but a series of systematically developed Paragraphs; that each Paragraph treats of a specific phase of the Subject of the composition, and that this Subject bears the same relation to the entire theme that the Subject Sentences do to their respective Paragraphs. Thus it is that we can consider the long theme or composition as consecutively and systematically arranged Paragraphs, each one a perfect development in itself and bearing a definite relation to the Subject of the composition.

Method of Development of a Given Subject into a Theme of More than One Paragraph

The method of writing a long theme is the same as that of writing one Paragraph. To write one Paragraph we first lay the foundation which we call the Subject Sentence, and upon which we construct the Paragraph; to write a composition of more than one Paragraph, we lay the foundation of each Paragraph. We must remember that each Paragraph is a definite development of a particular phase of the composition Subject; hence we must plan carefully just what phases we shall discuss. Then let us express each phase in the form of a Subject Sentence; arrange the Sub-

ject Sentences in such consecutive order that each forms a link in the chain; then write the Paragraphs.

The important thing to remember in planning a long theme is to compose the Subject Sentences. Some sort of outline may be made that you may have before you those phases of the subject which you will discuss. But do not begin to write a word until you have reduced this plan-form into *Subject Sentences*. Do not begin to build until you have something to build upon.

The following may serve as an illustration of the scheme in practice. The subject assigned was *A Criticism of Milton's Comus*.

Illustrative Work

Par. 1. This first Paragraph served as an introduction in which the writer enumerated in general the phases of the poem he would discuss. It read as follows: —

In this criticism of *Comus*, I shall speak briefly of the place the poem holds in English literature; the history of the first presentation of *Comus;* the poem as a narrative, and as an allegory; and shall give in some detail a critical analysis of the poem.

Par. 2. Naturally, *Comus* occupies a very high place in literature.

Par. 3. Taking place on the appointment of the Earl of Bridgewater as President of Wales, the first presentation was a great success.

Par. 4. In greater detail, the poem tells the story of the perils of the Earl's children as they pass through a forest on their way to their father's palace.

Par. 5. This drama is no less an allegory than a story.

Par. 6. Having discussed *Comus* as to its place in litera-

ture, its history, its narrative worth, and its allegorical features, I shall take up a critical analysis of the poem.

Par. 7. *Comus* is a lyric form of the drama, known as the masque.

Par. 8. All the characteristics of the masque show the tendency of the day to exaggeration and extravagance.

Par. 9. As soon as we have decided upon the form of the poem, we notice the various mythological characteristics, and very apt use of words.

Par. 10. Another prominent characteristic of the poem is the wonderful use of particularly appropriate epithets.

Par. 11. There are, however, many peculiarities of Milton's style which do not come under any of these heads, but rather under the general beliefs of the times.

Par. 12. In this criticism of *Comus*, we can only say as a conclusion that its place in literature is that of a forest giant, whose lofty branches towering above its companions lead our fancy almost to the skies.

Remarks in Regard to the Work Above. —

1. A general plan was made in which the pupil decided upon certain phases under which the poem might be discussed.
2. He stated definitely and clearly those phases in his opening Paragraph.
3. He framed in the form of a Subject Sentence, each phase of the subject; moreover, finding several phases to be discussed under the *critical analysis*, he framed each into a Subject Sentence.
4. By some introductory words, such as, "In greater detail," "No less than," etc., he linked his Subject Sentences into a chain.

5. He realized that the Subject Sentences, thus linked, formed a firm foundation for the entire structure.
6. He realized, also, that these first sentences must give the thought of the entire composition. (Read the first sentences of *Macaulay on Johnson* and notice that the thought of the entire essay can easily be gathered by reading only these opening sentences.)

5. Paragraph Drill. — The Subject Sentences composed by the various pupils for the work in § 3 were, no doubt, different types. They probably offered individual interpretations of the subject in a phase which appealed to the pupil. This is exactly what should happen. Thus it can be seen that all the subjects given in § 3 are capable of several subject sentences, and hence are capable of being developed into a number of Paragraphs. A variety of exercises can be offered in connection with this drill. The following are but suggestions: —

1. Compose two or three or four (according to the nature of the subject, decided by the teacher) Subject Sentences on the same subjects enumerated in § 3.
2. Modify and arrange these Subject Sentences in such a manner that each one forms a link with the preceding and leads up naturally to the following.
3. Plan three Paragraphs to be written on Subject No. — (assigned by the teacher).
4. Plan four Paragraphs to be written on Subject No. —.

Continue the work in the manner indicated above. Vary the number of Paragraphs to the nature of the Subject.

6. Write several Paragraphs on a subject selected from § 3 above or on any subject.

7. **Summary.** — From this chapter on the Period of Originality, we can draw the following conclusions: —

1. The Period of Originality is the last stage of development in any art, and lays emphasis upon original and artistic expression.

2. This last period has been the natural outgrowth of a thorough mastery of the mechanical structure of a paragraph.

3. The first important step in this period is the laying of the foundation of the Paragraph; in other words, composing the Subject Sentence in which there is some fundamental quality or fact *to be proved.*

4. This plan of composing the Subject Sentence of the Paragraph is equally applicable to a series of Paragraphs which may constitute an entire theme or composition. Hence with any given subject (1) decide what phases you will discuss, (2) frame each phase into the form of a Subject Sentence, (3) arrange these Subject Sentences that they serve as links in a chain, (4) develop and prove the Subject Sentences.

APPENDIX

To the teacher who believes in the value of technical English, it is hoped that this little book will appeal. Such a teacher is one who demands a concrete method of presenting this subject of English Composition and who therefore lays stress upon the structure and the underlying foundation of the art. It is not that he fails to appreciate ornate writing, but believes rather that it is secondary in importance to the study of its technique. Especially is such a teacher convinced of this fact when it is a question of the average High School mind; hence he seeks to impress upon the pupil the value of such a study as the most practical means of attaining a style simple, clear, and forceful.

Nor is the demand for technical English limited to the teacher; pupils, likewise, have expressed the same desire. The geometry scheme of this book is the direct outcome of the expression of such a need. This need manifested itself in a confused and badly arranged paragraph. The writer said, "I have ideas, but don't know what to do with them; now, in mathematics, I know just what I am doing." It was evident that this boy was voicing the sentiment of many another pupil. A geometry proposition on the board at that time served as an inspiration. When a comparison was made and the startling but simple analogy discovered, it was evident that the transferring of the mathematical scheme from the one to the other would meet the pupil's demand for the concrete and tangible.

The scheme of the book being thus the outcome of the incident above, the method of development offered is the one found to be the most practical for the pupil's demands. Of course the extent of work covered must be left to the teacher, but practical experience has proved the efficiency of slow and thorough work in each

one of the periods of paragraph development. There should be constant daily drill in developing paragraphs in imitation of the models studied, paragraphs of suggestion built upon lectures and other correlated work, and original paragraphs built upon given subject sentences. Not until this preliminary work has become a subconscious element in their writing, should the pupils be encouraged to compose their own subject sentences and paragraphs. When the structural process has become thoroughly absorbed, then there will be no difficulty as to the last step. Indeed, artistic and personal expression will be stimulated by the fact that the mechanical foundation has become but a means to an end. Above all, do not allow the pupils to hurry from one step to another. With some, the structural process may become absorbed more quickly than with others; these are the pupils of some natural ability, but these pupils are few, and even in such cases constant structural drill is of value. To the other pupils, the ninety-nine out of one hundred, the need of structural drill is of utmost importance. Perhaps they will never write artistically; even so, they can write correctly, simply, clearly, and forcefully. These are the pupils who should not be allowed to progress quickly. If they have not reached the step of original development, help them; give them subject sentences; do not allow them to try to compose them for themselves yet; have them work out each step according to the formula first, before they attempt to write a paragraph. Especially, inculcate upon them that they can write structurally perfect paragraphs. Do not encourage originality when it means confusion and distorted expression; rather encourage structural perfection when it means clearness and strength.

With such an end in view, the material selected has been purposely limited in scope. The reason for this is that the nature and size of the book demand some such narrowing of literary selection. It seemed best to lay emphasis upon those models of simple, clear, and forceful expression, which, because of these qualities, had made their way into the list of college require-

ments. Hence it is that Macaulay, Irving, Burke, Franklin, and Addison have been quoted so often as authors whose style proves them to have realized the importance of the technique of writing. For this reason it is hoped a new interest will be aroused in these writers, that they may serve to prove that their own mastery of the technique of the art was accomplished only by going through much the same mechanical process that is urged upon the students.

But let it not be imagined that the scheme of this book is limited in its application to these past masters of prose style. Nor let it be imagined that their works alone can be analyzed and submitted to a mathematical test. In our own age no better example can be given than Stevenson, that master of technique and of style, the mechanic and artist in one. Every paragraph of his writings can be reduced to its lowest terms, and, when stripped of literary embellishments, can be found to be of a mathematical, rigid structure. Nor is Stevenson alone of the modern writers a master of style. There are excellent paragraphs in our magazines, in articles found in the *Nation*, the *Outlook*, the *Living Age*, the *Atlantic Monthly;* our textbooks of history, geography, and science; in the works of Kipling, Roosevelt, Bliss Perry, Henry van Dyke; in the more recent books of Farnol, Harold Bell Wright, and Hewlett. The list can be easily increased and almost indefinitely so; for the very fact that these writers are recognized, is due to their ability to express themselves simply, clearly, and forcefully. Hence it follows that it is possible to analyze their paragraphs and find them built upon a definite and mathematical structure.

It is not claimed, however, by any of our writers that the ability to write perfectly constructed paragraphs is a gift of the gods. Stevenson, indeed, shows himself to have studied the mechanics of the art before he dared allow his own wonderful literary genius to ornate and beautify the stiff underlying framework. I quote, therefore, at length from his "A College Magazine," in *Memories and Portraits*, for I feel sure that his words show

his conception of the necessity of studying English composition from a technical standpoint, and from the point of view of the plan offered in Chapter II, on "Imitation." Stevenson writes thus:—

"Whenever I read a book or a passage that particularly pleased me, in which a thing was said or an effect rendered with propriety, in which there was either some conspicuous force or some happy distinction in the style, I must sit down at once and set myself to ape that quality. I was unsuccessful, and I knew it; and tried again, and was again unsuccessful, and was always unsuccessful; but at least in these vain bouts, I got some practice in rhythm, in harmony, in construction, and the co-ordination of parts. I have thus played the sedulous ape to Hazlitt, to Lamb, to Wordsworth, to Sir Thomas Brown, to Defoe, to Hawthorne, to Montaigne, to Baudelaire, and Obermann.

"That, like it or not, is the way to learn to write; whether I have profited or not, that is the way. It was so Keats learned, and there was never a finer temperament for literature than Keats; it was so, if we could trace it out, that all men have learned; and that is why a revival of letters is always accompanied or heralded by a cast back to earlier and fresher models. Perhaps I hear some one cry out, 'Tut this is not the way to be original!' It is not, nor is there any way but to be born so. Nor yet, if you are born original, is there anything in this training that shall clip the wings of your originality. There can be none more original than Montaigne, neither could there be any more unlike Cicero; yet no craftsman can fail to see how much the one must have tried in his time to imitate the other. Burns is the very type of a prime force in letters; he was, of all men, the most imitative. Shakespeare, himself, the imperial, proceeds directly from a school.

"It is only from a school that we can expect to have good writers; it is almost invariably from a school that great writers, these lawless exceptions, issue. Nor is there anything here that

should astonish the considerate. Before he can tell what cadences he truly prefers, the student should have tried all that are possible; before he can choose and preserve a fitting key of words, he should long have practiced the literary scales; and it is only after years of such gymnastics that he can sit down at last, legions of words swarming to his call, dozens of turns of phrases simultaneously bidding for his choice, and he himself, knowing what he wants to do, and, within the narrow limits of a man's ability, able to do it.

"And it is the great point of these imitations that there still shines beyond the student's reach his inimitable model," etc.

With such encouragement from one whose writings are models of perfect structure, it is with less fear that I write these few suggestions to teachers who may use this book.

Chapter I. General Discussion of the Paragraph

1. Select Subject Sentences from a variety of sources. Analyze them into the two definite parts. Show that writers of a clear forceful style make in a Subject Sentence a definite statement of what they intend to discuss in the Paragraph.

2. Vary the exercises on page 29. Select Paragraphs from contemporary writers. Show that Paragraphs can be called Proofs of their Subject Sentences.

Note. — With the lower classes in the High School, this elementary work can be carried on profitably for a month or more. Do not allow even the upper classes to move too quickly from the elementary stage.

Chapter II. The Period of Imitation

1. Follow exactly and slowly the steps in this period. *Look out only for structural perfection;* mark the Paragraph right or wrong from this point of view, as you would a mathematical problem. Daily Paragraph writing is urged.

2. Lay emphasis upon Section 14 of this Chapter. Pupils will enjoy this picture-puzzle sort of work; moreover, they will become convinced that writers do build their Paragraphs upon mathematical structures.

NOTE. — The amount of time spent upon this period must depend upon the nature of the pupils. It may be two months; it may be more; the important thing is that the daily results of the study show a mastery of the work of this period.

CHAPTER III. THE PERIOD OF SUGGESTION

1. Insist that the Subject Sentences of the topic to be discussed be written upon the board. Use the formula in proving the Subject Sentences first, before the Paragraph is written. (See the works on Franklin and Macbeth in Chapter III.)

2. Emphasis should be laid upon Paragraph recitation. Let the pupils develop Paragraphs *orally*, stating their Subject Sentences.

NOTE. — The work of this period lies largely with the teacher. It is for him to further the advance of structural perfection by his own discussions and lectures. He should be sure that his own Paragraphs are perfect and that each has a Subject Sentence. It is advised that the teacher write these sentences upon the board that the pupils may follow the proof more carefully and easily. Do not allow the pupils to compose their own Subject Sentences.

CHAPTER IV. THE PERIOD OF ORIGINALITY

1. Lay much emphasis upon the composing of the Subject Sentence. Let the pupils compose such sentences on all kinds of subjects, embracing the four forms of discourse.

2. Still insist upon structural perfection; at the same time encourage artistic expression.

NOTE. — This period, I believe, is almost limited in scope to the two upper classes. Great danger often arises from allowing

pupils to develop original Subject Sentences too early. When the technique has been mastered, originality is bound to express itself, and where there is little originality, there can be developed the ability of clear and simple expression.

As I have said before, the plan of the book is not arbitrary. It is such a scheme as can be used almost in individual cases, and, therefore, can be made a profitable study to any one who appreciates the importance and the value of the technique of written composition.

The following passage from Arlo Bates's *Talks on Writing English* expresses adequately my own ideas, and hence is quoted at some length. He writes:—

"It is important to remember that the best technical training is that in which nothing is considered but technical excellence. The student should write with his entire attention fixed upon the technical excellence of the work. He must not think of what he is doing, but of how he is doing it. It is a long time before the student has a right to look upon himself as a producer at all; and the more completely he can preserve the attitude of a learner, the better will be the result of his self-training.

"The analysis of sentences is common in schools, but, as far as I know, there is little of analysis of paragraphs. To my thinking, there is more to be gained from the latter than from the former. The analysis of the paragraph calls for a wider view, for a better comprehension of subject sentences, and for a more developed idea of form. I do not wish to be understood as endeavoring to invent a new torture for pupils, or one more chance for further overburdening teachers already overloaded. I merely call attention to the value as a means of mental and literary training of the study of the paragraph structure in the works of the masters of style and to the fact that such study is an indispensable part of literary training."

INDEX

Addison, imitated by Franklin, 39.
  paragraph from, 41.
Analysis of subject sentence, 24.
Argumentative paragraphs, 85.
Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin, paragraph from, 22, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 72, 81.

Bates, Arlo, extract from, 121.
Burke, paragraph from, 19, 86, 87.

Carlyle, paragraph from, 21.
Cause of existence of paragraph, 17, 18.
Coherence, 10, 13.
College requirement work, exercise on, 95.
Comments on imitation period, 55.
Composition, cause of existence, 17.
  subjects, 17.
  whole, 17.
Composition writing, solution of problem, 13.
Conclusions, general, 52.
  summary of, 35.
Concrete method desirable, 9.
Corollary to imitation period, 88.

Definitions of paragraph, 7, 18.
Demonstration, example, 32.
  of geometry proposition, 31.
Description, analysis of, 66.
Development into theme, 109.
Discussion of paragraph, 7, 17.
Double process of procedure, 56.

Eliot, George, paragraphs from, 24, 82, 83, 84.
Emery, F. P., preface by, 3.
  quoted, 12.
Emphasis, 10, 13.
English, technical, 115.
Essay on Addison, paragraph from, 20, 22, 59, 65.
Essay on Burns, paragraph from, 21.
Essay on Johnson, paragraph from, 41, 58, 60, 62, 64.
Example of demonstration, 32.
Exercise, on college requirement work, 95.
  on descriptive paragraphs, 70.
  on expository and descriptive paragraphs, 80.
  on expository paragraphs, 58.
  on foundation sentences, 106.
  on good models, 40.
  on imitation, 39.
  on making subject sentences, 29.
  on position of subject sentence, 27.
  on selection of paragraphs, 43.
  on subject sentences, 20, 25, 26.
  on subjects, 37.
  on suggestion period, 100.
  on writer's purpose, 19.
Expository paragraphs, 56, 58.

Franklin, Benjamin, imitated Addison, 38.
  paragraph from, 22, 39, 72, 81.

General discussion on the paragraph, 119.
Geometry, proposition and paragraph, 30.
  applied to paragraph, 12.
  demonstration, 37.
George Eliot, paragraphs from, 24, 82, 83, 84.
Good models, exercise on, 40.
  meaning of, 40.
Graphic representation of paragraph, 35.

Hawthorne, paragraph from, 19, 21, 29.
House of the Seven Gables, paragraph from, 19, 21, 29.

Illustrative paragraph, 46, 49, 51, 57, 58, 80, 81.

argumentative, 85.
from Franklin, 94.
from *Macbeth*, 93.
Illustrative work, 110.
Imitation, exercise on, 39.
meaning of term, 38.
period of, 38, 119.
process of, 44.
Imitation period, comments on, 55.
corollary to, 88.
summary of, 89.
Importance, of paragraph, 17.
of subject sentence, 27.
Irving, Washington, paragraph from, 19, 23, 29, 42, 43, 70, 71, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78.
Ivanhoe, paragraph from, 30.

Macaulay, paragraph from, 20, 22, 41, 58, 59, 60, 62, 64, 65.
Macbeth, paragraph from, 93.
Material, limited in scope, 116.
Memories and Portraits, extract from, 118.
Models, good, 40.

Narrations of one paragraph, 79.

Originality, period of, 104, 120.

Paragraph, and geometry, 30.
argumentative, 85.
as geometry proposition, 12.
brief discussion of, 7.
cause of existence of, 18.
defined by pupils, 8.
definitions of, 7, 18.
expository, 57.
from Addison, 41.
from Benjamin Franklin, 22, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 72, 81.
from Burke, 19, 86, 87.
from Carlyle, 21.
from George Eliot, 24, 82, 83, 84.
from Hawthorne, 19, 21, 29.
from *House of the Seven Gables*, 19.
from Macaulay, 20, 22, 41, 58, 59, 60, 62, 64, 65.
from *Macbeth*, 93.
from R. L. Stevenson, 30.
from Walter Scott, 30.
from Washington Irving, 19, 23, 24, 29, 42, 43, 70, 71, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78.
general discussion of, 17, 119.
geometrical view of, 34.
graphic representation of, 35.
illustrative, 46, 49, 51, 57, 58, 66, 67, 68, 69, 80, 81, 85.
importance of, 17.
narrations of one, 79.
planning, 33, 47.
relation to subject sentence, 28.
steps in building, 185.
subject of, 18.
subject sentence of, 20.
written, 33.
Paragraph drill, 112.
Period, of imitation, 38, 119.
of originality, 104, 120.
of suggestion, 91, 120.
Planning the paragraph, 47.
Position of subject sentence, 27.
Procedure, double process of, 56.
Proof of subject sentence, 29.
Process of imitation, 44.
Purpose of writing, 18.

Range of the work, 88.
Remarks, 111.

Scott, paragraph from, 30.
Selection of paragraphs, 43.
Sentences, links between, 54.
Silas Marner, paragraph from, 24, 82, 83, 84.
Sketch Book, paragraph from, 19, 23, 24, 29, 42, 43, 70, 73, 73, 73, 75, 76, 77, 78.
Spectator Papers, paragraph from, 41.
Speech on Conciliation with America, paragraph from, 19, 86, 87.
Stevenson, R. L., paragraph from, 30.
Subject, of paragraph, 18.
purpose in writing, 18.
Subject sentence, analysis of, 24.
conclusion in regard to, 28.
elements of, 24.
exercises on, 25, 26.
importance of, 27.
importance of repeating, 53.

of paragraph, 20.
position of, 27.
proof of, 29.
relation to paragraph, 28.
Subjects of paragraphs, exercise on, 37.
Suggestion period, exercise on, 100.
summary of, 103.
Summary, of conclusions, 35.
of imitation period, 89.
of period of originality, 113.
Talks on writing English, extract from, 120.
Technical English, 115.
Technique, 11.
Theme, the long, 109.
Topic sentence, 9.
Treasure Island, paragraph from, 30.
Unity, 10, 13.
Writing, purpose of, 18.

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